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SECONDARY EDUCATION & JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

BY

P.D. CORRIGAN

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1	Why research into 'Secondary Education and Juvenile Delinquency'?	1-77
Chapter 2	What is Culture?	77-122
Chapter 3	Education as Guerilla Warfare;How the bourgeois failed to win the hearts and minds of the English working class.	123-208
Chapter 4	The dialectics of doing nothing; spare time activities	209-291
Chapter 5	The Problem of future work	292-346
Chapter 6	Conclusions- what does this thesis mean sociology; and the state	347-371

Bibliographies are at the end of each chapter

## ABSTRACT

This thesis is based upon a three year research project into the experiences of 14-15 year old male working class youth. It highlights, empirically, the areas of school, spare-time activity and ideas about future work as the experiences of major importance. These three areas were studied over a two year period in schools in Sunderland. A variety of research techniques were used. However, the empirical side of the research is of little importance without the theoretical and methodological ideas that were worked out alongside the empirical research.

Within these three areas of experience the thesis tries to show the way in which sociology has imported into its study a series of concepts that are not those of the boys. Thus through the filters of ideas about 'education', 'delinquency' and 'careers' sociology has tried to 'make sense' of working class youth experience. However, these concepts are at such distance from these boys that they can only warp their experiences beyond recognition.

The thesis tries to show that in these areas if the sociologist is prepared to listen to the different forms of language of the working class youth then a much more separate world view can be seen. One that perceives education as an attack; the police as people that 'pick on us for doing nowt'; and jobs as things that you end up in. Discipline is not a series of rules but a series of power struggles in school and on the streets. The boys reactions to these power struggles are tactical rather than moral; 'truancy' and 'deviancy' ~~are when intended as such~~ are tactics in this struggle.



However, much 'delinquency' on a Saturday evening is a series of activities that the boys do not perceive as law-breaking. Rather they perceive it as action within their own cultural categories. The interaction between the boys working class culture and that of the school and law represents the substance of the thesis.

THANKS

Stan Cohen supervised this thesis. All the time he knew how much to push me and when not to push me at all; when to continue to disagree with my ideas and when to give me my head. We come from very different personal and intellectual backgrounds, and I think that it is a monument to his tremendous understanding that we are still such close friends on the completion of the thesis. It's a struggle trying to understand the world; it's a bigger one trying to write about it; Stan has continually helped in that struggle. Anyone who knows me will realise how special Stan must be to have been able to be so helpful to someone like myself. This is my thesis but it wouldn't have happened without Dr. Cohen.

The other relatives, friends, wife and lovers all know how much they have helped me to write this. Special thanks must go to anyone who has been at the Durham Department of Sociology from 1969-73. The intellectual excitement of the place has continued throughout a whole series of different undergraduates and staff. This thesis would have been much much poorer without everyone who has been in 44 Old Elvet in those years. Then there are those people who have just lent me a typewriter, a book, cups of tea, some time for a talk, over this period. Without them the thesis would be more cramped.

Special words must be said for Philip Corrigan for continually reminding me of what is important in my work; Rosemary Corrigan for putting up with me for so long; the boys in Sunderland for reducing a terrible piece of positivist research to ruins, and for maintaining my faith in the reality of rebellion.

## TWO QUOTATIONS ABOUT THE THESIS

### (1) METHODOLOGICAL IMPOSSIBILITY

"The fact that we cannot manage to achieve more than an unstable grasp of reality doubtless gives the measure of our present alienation; we constantly drift between an object and its mystification, powerless to render its wholeness. For if we penetrate the object we liberate it but we destroy it, and if we acknowledge its full weight, we respect it but restore it to a state which is still mystified. It would seem that we are for some time yet always to speak excessively about reality. This is probably because ideologism and its opposite are types of behaviour which are still magical, terrorised, blinded and fascinated by the split in the social world. And yet this is what we must seek: a reconciliation between reality and men, between descriptions and explanations, between object and knowledge". BARTHES (1954; 159)

### (2) WORKING CLASS EXPERIENCE AND BOURGEOIS VALUES

BARTHES (~~1954; 159~~)

'But then what about school, says you. Ah now with school begins his contact with the upstairs world which so far he has only known of as buffered off by his parents. And school, which is the council school, of course, is in origin quite <sup>alien</sup> ~~akin~~ to working class life. It does not grow from that life, it is not "our" school, in the sense in which other schools can be so spoken of by the folk of other classes. The government forced them on us, and the real shaping of the working class boy goes on after they are shut. That is a very important point to remember, that school in working class life

expresses none of that life, it is an institution clapped on from above. Thus all his life a man from this environment will regard many knowledges and skills with a suspicion which is incomprehensible to those who found that learning to be their natural birthright.

In the council schools you are taught a respect for white collars, punctuality (the best prizes usually go for this), a certain amount of docility, patriotism, religion and the rest of the half-hearted precepts which teachers are unwillingly pushed into spreading".

Jack Common &. (1938: 60-61)

## SECTION A

Chapter 1    Why research into 'secondary education'  
                 and 'juvenile delinquency'?

Chapter 2    What is culture?

CHAPTER 1. WHY RESEARCH INTO 'SECONDARY EDUCATION' AND  
'JUVENILE DELINQUENCY'?

SELF-CONSCIOUS INTRODUCTION	1 - 5
BIOGRAPHY	6 - 7
CHRONOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH	7 - 11
October 1969 - December 1969	
January 1970 - May 1970	
May 1970	
May - July 1970	
July - September 1970	
October - November 1970	
December 1970	
January 1971 - March 1971	
April - June 1971	
July - August 1971	
September 1971 - October 1972	
THEORETICAL MAPS	12 - 36
Universality as a world view versus class	
society as a world view	
History as living; history as methodology	
Languages	
Experience	
THEORETICAL KEY	37 - 41
SOME NOTES ON METHODOLOGY	41 - 50
The impossibility of 'correct' methodology	
Why Schools?	
Why in Sunderland and why those schools?	
CHOOSING RESEARCH METHODS WITHIN A SCHOOL	50 - 57
Teaching in the school - filling a role	
The creation of ambiguity	
A note on commitment and values in the	
research act	

METHODS USED	57 - 66
Questionnaire	
Why those questions?	
Interview	
Interview - questions asked	
Diaries	
General observations on methods	
TOWARDS AN ANARCHIST METHODOLOGY	66 - 68
REST OF THESIS	69
BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR CHAPTER	70 - 77

## Self-conscious introduction

This thesis is about the experiences of 14-15 year old working class males. It pays particular attention to their experiences connected with the education system. It also covers the areas usually dealt with under the sub-titles of leisure, delinquency and career. Much of it challenges these concepts as organising concepts for understanding these experiences. It is based upon empirical work carried out in two schools in Sunderland.

Introductions to theses in sociology need to provide much more information than they normally do. This is because the nature of the endeavour of writing up sociological research projects has changed recently. Or to put it more correctly we are now provided<sub>1</sub> with a way of writing about the actual research process, that has meant that the whole mode of writing up research has become problematic. This has meant that the writer now has to provide a very different set of information than in the past. Cicourel<sub>2</sub>, a writer whose criticisms of the way in which research is reported influenced my project a great deal, has stressed the need for much more biographical detail that provides the reader with insights into the background and values of the writer, thereby uncovering some of the issues that he may treat as unproblematic<sub>3</sub>. In its extreme sense this is an impossible task to try and achieve, since the writer cannot write us an inclusive autobiography before each study, but as will be said throughout this introduction, the impossibility to of achieving a task totally is insufficient reason to leave it out altogether.



1 Cicourel (1968 Chp. 1) and more recently the whole literature on self-reflexive sociology; e.g. Gouldner (1970). However, the ideas and language behind this new method can be found in Sartre (1960)

2 Cicourel (1968 Chp. 1)

3 "The error of the sociologist is not that he thinks politically or sociologically but that he is not aware of it. Awareness may help him avoid some of the gross errors of myopia. (1) Mistaking his own normative values for 'objective' fact; thus the liberal sociologist may mistake his belief in the consensual society for actual consensus (2) projecting a normative theory appropriate to the experience of one group on to another group; this is what Ellison means when he says that the liberal sociologist is not necessarily speaking for the Negro. Indeed, the errors of myopia are perhaps greatest whenever the middle-class sociologist presumes to describe the world and motivation of persons in lower status. Seeing the lower-class Negro within a white liberal vocabulary may be very realistic politics, but it is not very accurate sociology".

Horton J. (1966: 713)

The introduction is also meant to inform the reader of the way in which the research is carried out. This consists not only of methodology but also of the theory that created the methodology. Any discussion of methodology must now treat a great deal more of the whole enterprise of research ~~as~~ problematic. The assumptions behind a great deal of sociology has been the general neutrality of certain research methods. Thus these are never really discussed as being of substantive importance. A writer writing up a piece of research should no longer expect immunity from failing to cope with these problems.

However, perhaps ~~the~~ most obvious failure of writers of sociology research is <sup>TO REFUSE (Fail)</sup> to describe the research process as it actually happened. Instead they conform to an ideal typical form of writing approximating to the model of (1) Theory - Methodology - Research - Results - Conclusion. Anyone who has carried out an empirical research knows that this is not the way in which research is actually done. Admittedly researchers do have theoretical ideas before working out their methods; and they do draw conclusions from their research, but the restrictions of theory to the chronological first place, followed by methodology, fails to appreciate the moving process of theory creation and the continuing use of methods throughout. Glaser and Strauss<sub>4</sub> may have been prescriptive in their advocacy of grounded theory, but at the same time they were merely describing the research process as it actually happened rather than as it was written. Definitely, as far as this research was concerned ~~the overall~~ there was no static statment of theory at any point. Indeed in the very act of writing up the thesis,

4. GLASER, B.; STRAUSS, A.; (1967)

a great deal of theoretical rethinking has happened about the possibilities and limitations of sociological research. Most importantly though it was when I was in personal contact with the boys in Sunderland that my theoretical ideas about my research changed most rapidly (see chronology). Thus the relationship between theory and the research act is a dialectical one since the understandings of the boys actions in Sunderland were understood through my theoretical ideas yet my theoretical ideas were formulated partly by the relationship I had with the boys. Therefore this introduction will not read like a theoretical statement that led to the research.

Nevertheless, whilst I would say it was absurd to style theory as a thing apart, it is vital to spell out some of the central tenets that have guided the research in some way. This is important for two reasons. Firstly because it is part of the attempted honesty advocated above and secondly to act as a kind of glossary to enable the reader to understand the rest of the thesis in the way that it was written. This is not to mean that it is impossible to criticise from outside of its own position but rather that these theoretical statements/<sup>should</sup>allow the reader to understand the thesis and then criticise it from the position of understanding.

I have related four major areas of my particular sociological world view that I felt have been of constant importance through my research. These do not add up to a theory of sociology; indeed there are considerable tensions between parts of these areas and parts of others. Yet they represent sets of ideas that continually informed my research at all stages and at all levels. (Therefore to leave them out simply because of difficulties is once more

to fail to inform the reader). These four major areas are:

- i. The differences between a universalistic conception of belief system as against a class conception.
- ii. The use of history in understanding both institutions and experience.
- iii. The importance of different languages that arise from different experiences.
- iv. The use of experience as the unit of analysis.

These four areas will not be theoretically "proven" in the thesis as they are intended as overall maps and guides for the reader.

The areas of information that will be provided in this introduction are: a personal biography; a simple chronology of the research; a discussion of the theoretical maps outlined above; an outline of the specific reasons behind the choice of the school as the area of study within these maps; and a specific discussion of the time and space of the location of the research.

~~4 Glaser, B.; Strauss, A. (1968)~~

BIOGRAPHY 1948-1969

I was born into a family that was from the working class of South London, and went to school in a grammar school in South-East London. Whilst I did well at school and was considered bright there were certain points about the social organisation of the school that were mysterious to me. There were things that I was expected to do that I could not see the importance of; for example go to the school play even if I didn't want to in order to support the school. There were boys from very similar backgrounds to myself in this school and we tended to go around together and work out a strategy for coping with the institution. The strategy we evolved was based upon politics in the shape of socialism and an intellectual discussion of the social sciences.

This is of importance only in so far as I believe it has informed by approach to the school continually. In that even in my school where we were highly motivated in terms of wanting to go on to higher education there were things about school that were mentioned by the teachers as being more important than the content of the lesson. These created problems for some of the boys and it is this experience that provides a part of the background to the research.

The combination of politics, the social sciences and a familial interest in the welfare state led me to the L.S.E. for my first degree studying B.Sc. Sociology in Branch III. This degree led me to a certain sort of approach to topics that I was interested in and considered worthy of research. The stress of the degree was upon applied sociology rather than a theoretical approach;

the students who have studied Branch III do tend to select 'social problems' orientated research topics rather than pure theory or methodology. Whilst at the L.S.E. (1966-1969) I took part in 'The Troubles' at that institution which greatly effected my outlook upon the idea of an intellectual career, especially so since I wrote a dissertation upon the meaning of student unrest whilst I was there. This dissertation and involvement led me to look at acts of rebellion as being experienced as action for themselves rather than as means to an end. Thus student sit-ins and strikes could be seen as attempts to challenge the power situation not only in terms of direction but also in terms of the mode of action itself. Therefore to see the sit-in as a weapon is insufficient since it is also an end in itself. I felt this was also true with other forms of deviance and by 1969 I was strongly interested in understanding actions that came within the aegis of the sub-discipline of the sociology of deviance.

I decided to try to go to Durham to work with Dr. Stanley Cohen who was writing at that time about vandalism,<sup>5</sup> and I decided to study young working class males in an institutional setting (because of the study of L.S.E. students within their institution) with special reference to acts of deviance. I came to Durham from L.S.E. with a uni-dimensional view of methodology, a view that was totally positivist, and was going to attempt a research strategy around the ideas of alienation within the school.

#### CHRONOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The three years over which the research was carried out would obviously need a much more detailed biography which would be necessary coupled with the actual chronology

of the research. This of course is difficult since it is not easy to pick out those things that are relevant and important, from the whole detail of three years of life. So I have simply attempted to accentuate those areas that I felt were vital.

OCTOBER 1969 - DECEMBER 1969

I read studies of delinquent subcultures and gangs and realised very early on the impossibility of both operationalising the concept of alienation and yet keeping its real experiential meaning. However, I still felt that it was important to focus attention upon and institution which the boys were involved in. This seemed to lead to studying the school especially following recent studies of delinquency.<sup>6</sup> Methodologically I began to see the difficulty of defining an area of study in anything but the terms of the wider society. I started to read the new deviancy theory which led me to the idea of taking the definition of the problem FROM the boys I was interested in. I selected Sunderland as the place of research.

JANUARY 1970 - MAY 1970

Contacted Sunderland Education Department (who were very helpful (see below and conclusion)). I decided to ask two schools Cunningham<sup>7</sup> Secondary Modern School and Municipal Comprehensive School to allow me to carry out research in them. I selected these schools on a knowledge of Sunderland and because I knew a teacher at Municipal School. The two schools looked very different upon immediate entry and this impression was confirmed by the impressions of the deputy education officer.

6 See below. Studies include COHEN, A.K. (1955),  
DOWNES, D. (1966), HARGREAVES (1967), PHILIPSON (1971)  
POWER (1972)

7 The names of the schools and the boys have been changed

throughout.]

I then contacted the headmaster of Municipal School to allow me to give a pilot questionnaire to some thirty boys and to interview fifteen boys.

I then constructed a questionnaire which was attempting to understand several areas of experiences of the boys; their experience of school; their ideas about future work; their spare time activities and a self-report delinquency survey.

I read sociology of education literature and methodology and methods literature. The limitations of the education studies and their links to educational ideology were immediately seen as possible pitfalls for the thesis. Also the crippling nature of positivism was realised both by reading and by discussion in the Department of Sociology at Durham.

MAY 1970

Application of questionnaire to thirty early school leavers. I realised in a very concrete way the gap between the methods used and the social experience of the boys I was concerned with. It was obvious that the boys and I thought differently. I seriously started questioning the whole nature of the enterprise. Over this summer the implications of the fact that I wasn't a 14 year old boy from Sunderland nearly persuaded me that the enterprise of sociological research was in fact impossible. There were obvious difficulties in coming to grips with the way of life of someone who was distant in terms of experience from the researcher. However, there were some things that I felt I could understand about the boys and decided to continue with the research.



MAY - JULY 1970

I analysed the questionnaires and carried out pilot interviews with fifteen boys. This revealed a totally different network of experiences than I had expected. By mid-June I realised that it was becoming impossible to limit the scope of the research within the sub-discipline of sociology of deviance. I perceived one of the major problems of the boys as that of having to go to school. In the interviews I met one or two very confident boys ('Nanker' and 'Phelge')<sup>8</sup> who <sup>appeared to feel</sup> ~~felt~~ able to tell me everything <sup>to them</sup> of importance about school. This was very important and provided me with insights that enabled the rest of the research to be created.

JULY 1970 - SEPTEMBER 1970

I read Mead, symbolic interactionists and phenomenologists and felt that they provided a set of useful approaches but felt that they lacked any real analysis of constraints in situations and that this detracted from its usefulness in understanding social experience. In this and a continued reading of interactionist deviancy theory I felt that the idea of power was absent or underplayed. This led me to the sociology of education in an attempt to find the location of the power of the teacher.

OCTOBER 1970 - NOVEMBER 1970

Draw up the new questionnaire in an attempt to make it less directed to a positivist conception of the research. I also began to read the literature on working class culture to try and understand the way that sociology talked about the boys' background. I found this literature contained a great deal of class bias in its interpretation of working class life.

8 'Nanker' and 'Phelge' were the nicknames of the two boys.

DECEMBER 1970

Gave questionnaires to both schools. Tried to give out 60 in <sup>MUNICIPAL</sup> school and 40 in <sup>CUNNINGHAM</sup> school. But due to a muddle less boys showed up and 48 boys in <sup>MUNICIPAL</sup> school and 45 in <sup>CUNNINGHAM</sup> school filled in the questionnaire. I decided that headmaster of <sup>CUNNINGHAM</sup> school was likely to prove unhelpful given much further contact and that it would be better to concentrate interviews on <sup>The other</sup> school (see below).

JANUARY 1971 - MARCH 1971

Carried out interviews of 47 boys in <sup>MUNICIPAL</sup> school.

APRIL 1971 - JUNE 1971

Coding of questionnaires. Put them in the computer. Also wrote out the interviews myself, since this gave me an intimate knowledge of every interview both as a whole and as a series of specific pieces of experience.

JULY and AUGUST 1971

After initial paralysis at the thought of organising and writing it all out, I decided to try and tackle the 'careers' section first. Reading around this area and a little into industrial sociology and the basic ideas of working class culture. Realised that the only way to locate the set of meaning, called working class culture and the education system was historically. I wrote careers section.

SEPTEMBER 1971 - OCTOBER 1972

Writing up of thesis.

## THEORETICAL MAPS

If, as the chronology of the research states there is no overt and coherent theoretical stance made at the beginning of the research then it may seem difficult to justify a section called 'theoretical maps'. However, because it may not be possible to point to a set of theories that sums up the research, that does not mean that there was no theory involved in it; rather it means that these ideas could not be located within a school of sociological theory, but that they existed as part of the way in which I interpreted the world. It is these background theories that need exposition here for as Cicourel says,

"I assume that the critical task of the researcher is to show the reader how the research materials are always understood by reference to unstated background expectancies that both members and observers employ to recognise and to understand the activities" (Cicourel 1968; 15 )

### 1) UNIVERSALITY AS A WORLD VIEW V. CLASS SOCIETY AS A WORLD VIEW.

The use of universalism as explicit theory is a continuing strand in sociology from Comte to Garfinkel, and an analysis of its importance and its place in the intellectual tradition of the past 150 years is beyond the scope of this thesis. What is important is to recognise its importance and its pervasiveness as an overall world view. It reverberates in each of the substantive areas of sociology that this thesis covers; culture; education, youth culture, rule-breaking and careers. What Gouldner says about Parsons can be generalised,

"Ungirding the phantasmogorical conceptual superstructure that Parsons has raised there is one unshakeable metaphysical conviction; ~~that the world~~

is one, and must be made safe in its oneness. Its oneness, Parsons believes is the world's most vital character. Its parts therefore take on meaning and significance only in relation to this wholeness.

In his thrust towards unitariness, Parsons' system has a living connection with the tradition of Sociological Positivism, whose abiding impulse was to organise and integrate the social world".

(GOULDNER 1971; 199)

It is this drive towards oneness that has informed the more middle-range theorists and practitioners of sociology that comprise the bulk of the sociology criticised in this thesis. Therefore it is those actually using the idea of universalism that is important here.

Sociologists often find themselves carrying out research in areas where the actions of individuals need explanation or understanding precisely because they are different from actions that are expected. Thus, if my assertions about the importance of the world view of universal belief systems is correct, then they are engaged in understanding differences of action whilst operating with a theory based upon similarity of value systems. This must exclude certain methods of understanding and point to certain others.

For example if it is believed that one 15 year old boy in Sunderland has a similar set of values, not only to every other 15 year old boy in Sunderland, but to every policeman, J.P., teacher, parent and Member of Parliament, then we must explain why this boy may act in contravention of these values. For example in the field of truancy. If everyone believes in the usefullness of education, why

do some boys play truant and break their own (and everyone elses) values?

This method of explanation is, for obvious reasons, most notable in the field of deviance, for if we believe that two 15 year old boys are part of the same social unit, with the same ideas about rules and law then we must explain why these rules are broken by one and not by another.

In the sub-discipline of the sociology of deviance recent work<sub>9</sub> has shown that older criminology rested totally upon the mode of explanation outlined above. The question, "Why does he do it if he knows it is wrong?" was the major one asked by criminologists. Despite apparently rejecting this, I would contend that much of the theory and most of the research carried out within the sub-discipline is still informed by a world view of a universal value system. This however, takes a different form and rather than focus upon some trait of the actor, they put attention on the act; or to be more specific, the conditions of the actor at the time of the act as well as the conditions surrounding the act.

Thus for Matza,

"Delinquency is only epiphenomenally action. As I have stressed throughout, delinquency is essentially infraction. It is rule-breaking behaviour performed by juveniles aware that they are violating the law and of the nature of their deed and made permissible by neutralisation of infraction elements".

(MATZA, D. 1964; 161)

The object of the study has changed from the older criminology attacked by the interactionists, by the use of  
9 BECKER, H (1963 ); COHEN, S. (1970), TAYLOR, L. (1970)

a universal value system creates similarities in the mode of explanation. The area of study is reduced to explaining why, in certain circumstances these rules are broken when they are aware that these are laws; any theory has to explain how the individual momentarily negates this moral and legal code to enable him to commit the infraction. The important point for Matza is the universality of the power of the moral and legal code as a determinant of legal action (as against illegal infraction). For it is this power that stops the many forms of different actions that could be performed.

"There are millions of occasions during which a delinquency may be committed. Except for occasions covered by surveillance virtually every moment experienced offers an opportunity of offence. Yet delinquency fails to occur during all but a tiny proportion of these moments".

(MATZA, D. 1964; 69)

In this way the sociologist is left trying to explain the occasions when delinquency occurs ~~as~~ a form of aberration from the great mass of actions.

If we accept the importance of the universal laws and moral rules for Matza it is important to try and understand where they come from.

'The set of moral rules would appear at times to be almost 'natural'.

"Plural evaluation, shifting standards, and a moral ambiguity may, and do, coexist with a phenomenal realm that is commonly sensed on deviant. Thus the deviant nature of many phenomena is hardly problematic, the best evidence being that no operative member of society bothers to develop a position one

Thieves, except for Genet, do not believe in stealing, though they engage in it defensively justify it, and even develop a measure of expertise and a sense of craft. There is little need to choose abstractly between a common and perhaps natural human morality and what has become known as cultural relativism".

(MATZA, D. (1970; 12)

and

"I want to assume that deviant phenomena are common and natural. They are a normal and inevitable part of social life, as in their denunciation, regulation and prohibition. Deviation is implicit in the moral character of society. "To give oneself laws and to create the possibility of disobeying them come to the same thing" (Jean-Paul Sartre).... Straying from a path need be regarded as no less comprehensible nor more bewildering than walking it. Given the moral characters of social life, both naturally happen".

(MATZA, D. (1970; 13)

In these extracts Matza would appear to be claiming that the rules of a society are made by all the members of that society (as far as they are non-natural that is) and consequently since everyone plays a part in making the rules then everyone recognises these rules. Thus Matza discusses diverse sets of actions within a framework of universally accepted and universally understood norms. Throughout this thesis I will return to groups of sociologists that depend for their theoretical validity upon the idea of a universal value system throughout a society.

This argument is only put schematically here in the

introduction. The precise way in which I feel the newer interactionist theory of deviance fails to transcend the failures of the older criminology will be outlined in each substantive area and drawn together in a conclusion. For the moment though it is important for me to locate the interactionists with others who base their theories on universalistic ideas.

I would want to base my position upon a model of society that could be called a class society (though it is by no means within Marxist theory). I would want to claim that values and morals are arrived at by groups of people who share common experiences, and that there are many significant experiences that are not common to the whole of society. Thus I use the word class to differentiate these groups and will attempt to specify the common experiences it is based on wherever I use it significantly. I stand then with Thompson who bases class on experience,

"By class I understand a historical phenomenon, unifying a number of disparate and seemingly unconnected events, both in the new material of experience and in concoursing. I emphasise that this is a historical phenomenon. I do not see class as 'structure', nor even as a category, but as something which in fact happens (and can be shown to have happened) in human relationships.

More than this, the notion of class entails the notion of historical relationship. Like any other relationship, it is a fluency which evades analysis if we attempt to stop it dead at any given moment and anatomise its structure. The finest meshed sociological net cannot give us a pure specimen of



class, anymore than it can give us one of deference or of love. The relationship must always be embodied in real people and in a real context. Moreover, we cannot have two distinct classes, each with an independent being, and then bring them into relationship with each other. And class happens when some men as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared) feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) them.

(THOMPSON, E. (1968; 9-10)

Obviously then there are a number of aspects of this model of society that is important to explain. Firstly the nature of these common experiences and the way in which they are not common to all members of society. Secondly the way in which these different class experiences relate to each other is an interaction of great importance. Thirdly the experience of these interactions is for each class one of the major problems of their way of life. The thesis if it simply stressed the existence of class ways of life as being different from each other could, of course, point the fact that each class could live without interference with each other. However, in each chapter I will attempt to show that one of the major problems for the bourgeoisie is the action or the fears of action of the working class. Thus throughout I will lay stress upon these aspects of both working class culture and bourgeois culture that are problematic for each other. In education I will outline the way in which the bourgeoisie came to perceive of the way of life of the working class as problematic to them. As for the working class they were

living and acting purely in accordance with their experience. However the bourgeoisie created a series of institutions that were designed to change the action of the working class - most notably the education system. This solution to the problem for the bourgeoisie was in fact the problem for the working class youth who experience the education system as problematic. Their solutions to the problems posed by the experience of the education system (i.e. truancy, mucking about) then became the problems of the middle class.

In this way the solution for one class was the problem for another, because their experiences of the institutions in question were not simply different but were in the first place directed at another class and used state power to enforce that definition. Thus the chapter on education will attempt to show the way in which the bourgeoisie captured the definition of education.

Similarly in the field of law and the police: the problems of the bourgeoisie led them to the solution of creating a police force to clear the streets. This solution to the problem of fear of trouble on the streets then became the problem for the working class boys of Sunderland.

The dialectical relationship of problem/solution between the boy/agency of control becomes very important when understanding the empirical relationship. Solutions for the boys ARE problems for the institutions, problems for the boys ARE solutions for the institutions. This relationship is missed in all of the studies of social problems, for they accept in one form or another the definitions of the institutions whether as the organising

locus for their understanding or as the only possible 'problems'. Thus, whilst Becker (196 ; Chp. 1) correctly highlights social problems as those problems defined as such by groups in society, he then fails to discuss the problems of that wider society as experienced by them. Instead he discusses the same problems that have always been discussed in social problems readers. In this thesis 'problems' will be located specifically to groups and individuals in institutions. Thus their complex relationship between the problem of having to go to school and the problem of truancy can ONLY be untangled by an analysis which concerns itself all the time with the question Whose problem? Aneurin Bevan provides us with a useful example taken from the General Strike.

"One experience remains vividly in my memory. While the miners were striking in 1926 a great many people were moved to listen to their case. Certain high ecclesiastical dignitaries even went so far as to offer to mediate between the mine owners and the miners. They were concerned that the terms the coal owners were attempting to impose upon the miners were unreasonable and would entail much suffering and poverty for hundreds of thousands of miners' homes. Their efforts failed. The miners were beaten and driven back to work under disgraceful conditions. For years these conditions continued. But were those high Church dignitaries moved to intervene then? Not at all. For them the problem was solved. It had never consisted in the suffering of the miners, but in the fact that the miners were still able to struggle and therefore able to create a problem for the rest of the community. The problem was not their suffering but their struggle". BEVAN, A. (1952; 4-5)

Whilst I have spent some time criticising the idea of a universalistic world view, I would not hold with the opposite idea of a purely individual cognition either. The reasons why I think this view fallacious are outlined throughout the thesis in empirical terms. There are two arguments of a more theoretical nature that I would level in this chapter though.

Firstly, whilst it is true that each individual does experience the world through their own unique biography and whilst this does make their experience of the world unique, it is not possible at the moment for individuals to purely live as sentient beings and not to compromise the uniqueness of their experience. The very nature of relating to another person creates a common experience of sorts and this creates a means of communication that itself compromises the uniqueness of experience. Thus whilst it may be philosophically possible to imagine a unique person experiencing the world substantive experience at the moment is social in character and has common elements.

Secondly, it is important to realise that whilst a persons biography is totally unique in all its minute detail some parts of it are more important than others. I will argue throughout that some experiences are felt as more significant by individuals themselves and these experiences are shared. Thus despite the fact that each boy biographically has an idiosyncratic day, it is important that they all go to school together. That that experience is felt as important and is experienced together. Similarly with spare-time activity on the streets. As Mannheim has said,

"The degree in which the individualistic conception of the problems of knowledge gives a false picture of collective knowing corresponds to what would occur if the technique mode of work, and productivity of an internally highly specialised factory of 2,000 workers were thought of as if each of the 2,000 workers worked in a separate cubicle. Precisely because knowing is fundamentally collective knowing .. it presupposes a community of knowing which grows primarily out of a community of experiencing".

(MANNHEIM, K. 1936; 26-27)

It is this community of experiences which creates a community of knowing, a felt set of common experiences that I have called class.

## 2) HISTORY AS LIVING: HISTORY AS METHODOLOGY.

Despite the need to define class as a historical phenomenon sociology has continually failed to understand either the history of institutions or the way in which individuals experience can be understood historically. Throughout this thesis I will attempt to use history to provide a guide to understanding both institutions and experiences. Again Thompson provides us with some of the best leads in this.

"Sociologists who have stopped the time-machine and, with a good deal of conceptual huffing and puffing have gone down to the engine room to look, tell us that nowhere at all have they been able to locate and classify a class. They can only find a multitude of people with different occupations, incomes, status hierarchies and the rest. Of course they are right, since class is not this or that part of the machine,

but the way that the machine works, once it is set in motion - not this interest or that interest, but the friction of interests, the movement itself, the heat, the thundering noise".

(THOMPSON 1965; 357)

An experience such as class can only be understood over time, as a movement, as friction between groups. Many sociologists have attempted to stop the time-machine and understand social situations in a historical term, and for the most part those who have studied delinquency and education have consistently failed to interpret these institutions in any located historical setting. (Indeed books have been written which deliberately attempt to keep history and sociology conceptually theoretically - methodologically distinct<sub>10</sub>). Increasingly however and from a whole range of different viewpoints these a-historical analyses are coming under attack<sub>11</sub> and specifically worth mentioning in this category are the attacks on Goffman. He is a sociologist who has attempted to interpret situational realities with great sensitivity, yet never gives these studies any historical basis.

Each discrete interaction ritual or set of eye movements is analysed apart from any conception of time and space. These sets of actions appear to happen via vacuum, and the individual actors enter and leave the vacuum. This represents an attempt to create a set of generalities about social life that are applicable to a whole series of situations. However, in attempting this creation of generally applicable concepts Goffman fails to locate the experiences that he extrapolates from in the real world.

10 LIPSET, S. (196 )

11 COHEN, STAN (1972); LEACH, E. (1972)

Instead they appear in a sort of series of capsules of action with very little consequences and preconditions.

Goffman talks only about institutions as closed off entities in time and in space. To select institutions in this way almost inevitably would lead to the lack of use of history. For example if I had totally kept my research within the confines of the school then it would have been easy to exclude any sense of history, since there would be a tight sense of a world cut off in space, time and society. Individuals who run institutions of this sort tend to stop the time-machine themselves. Admittedly it is appallingly difficult to treat history with the same conceptual rigour as sociology, for if it is difficult for me to appreciate the experience of being a 14 year old boy in Sunderland when I am with him, how much more difficult is it for me to appreciate his father's and his grandfather's experiences of school.

As Laing has said;

"The intelligibility of social events requires that they<sup>be</sup>/always seen in a context that extends both spatially and in time. The dilemma is that this is often as impossible as it is necessary. The fabric of sociality is an interlaced set of contexts and meta-meta contexts. As we begin from micro-situations and work up to macro-situations".

and

"Things often go out of view in space and time at a boundary between here and now, and there and then - a boundary which unfortunately consigns here and now to unintelligibility without information from there and then, which is however beyond our reach".

(LAING, 1968; 14)

Thus the sorts of techniques that enable us to understand actions in here and now situations are not open to us in understanding there and then situations. Historical sources are biased towards the articulate bourgeoisie viewpoint and the sorts of working class biographical histories that are necessary are rare<sup>12</sup>.

However, the difficulty of elucidating experiential history does not invalidate its existence. Even given a total impossibility to understand a persons past experience this does not invalidate the importance of that history upon the present experience of the individual or group. History effects contemporary action in a number of disparate ways, ways which as Laing rightly says may be impossible to fully discover; but that nonetheless exist.

Apart from the existence of history as affecting the experience of people it is important to try and understand the history of institutions and the way that they evolved. Whilst this is easier than understanding the importance of experiential history, it still represents difficulties as will be seen in the <sup>discussions about</sup> ~~sections on the~~ Creation of the Education System and ~~the Creation of the~~ Police Force. Nevertheless it is important to stress that incompleteness of technique is no longer sufficient excuse for refusing to try and tackle a problem. It is better to have at least some of the historical setting of contemporary actions rather than none at all.

12 The two sorts of history of working class life that seem to have any validity are those from the working class words. COMMON (1938a; 1938b; 1951), SEABROOK (1970), ORWELL (1970; Vol. 1 194-243) and those who respected the historical articulation



of working class.

THOMPSON (1963); RUDE (1969); HOBBSBAWM (1968; 1969a; 1969b)

### 3) LANGUAGES

Following from the differences between classes based upon different experiences, there is a further theoretical point of direct relevance methodologically: the differences in languages used by these classes and the different patterns of communication.

"If a social group, by virtue of its class relations, i.e. as a result of common occupational functions and social status, has developed strong communal bonds; if the work relations of this group offer them little variety, little exercise in decision-making; if assertion if it is to be successful must be a collective rather than an individual act; if the whole task requires physical manipulation and control rather than symbolic organisation and control; if the diminished authority of the man at work is transferred into an authority of power at home; if the home is overcrowded; if the children socialise each other in an environment offering little intellectual stimuli; if all these attributes are found in one setting, then it is plausible to assume that such a social setting will generate a particular form of communication which will shape the intellectual, social and effective orientation of the children",

(BERNSTEIN, 1972; 472)

Bernstein now means much more than 'simply' two different types of the same language. He is referring

to different methods of communication for different classes of people, in short he is talking about different languages. Instead of seeing the working class and the bourgeoisie as using different dialects of the same language we must see them as speaking different languages representing different sets of experiences.

Obviously this has all sorts of important effects upon the way in which the social world must be viewed, but the one that I want to stress here is the effect it has upon the methodology of the sociologist, writing, talking, thinking in one language who tried to understand a set of social relationships that are structured, expressed and communicated to him in a different language. For example what happens if, following from the universal perception of the social world the sociologist believes that the individual he is studying sees the world and communicates with him in the same language. This is of course more than a simple methodological point about the way in which sociologists should write their questionnaires, it strikes at the very heart of the interpretation of experience across class lines.

For example to return to David Matza's discussion of moral rules (note above) he notes that "Thieves except for Genet do not believe in stealing, though they engage in it defensively justify it, and even develop a measure of expertise and a sense of craft". He also criticises Cohen for claiming that delinquents believe in delinquency where<sup>13</sup> he analyses a number of situations in which the delinquent fails to show commitment to his delinquency, Matza here<sup>14</sup> betrays a totally class-limited view of belief and commitment, for it is true that thieves do not believe in thieving in the way that Matza believes in the anti-war movement or anti-positivism.

For Matza to believe in something is to hold a consistent, articulated set of values that underpin your every action. He seems to expect thieves to take up a position in debate against the forces of law and order, to try and argue using logic, and arguments to get the police to change their ideas. To try and produce books and pamphlets condemning private property and to try and change the moral order. Similarly he would expect the boys in Sunderland to attempt to change the law on compulsory education if they really believed in their dislike of school. It is insufficient evidence for him that these people actually engage in stealing or truancy as an activity, simply because it is not backed up by an articulate and coherent set of values.

But as Erikson says,

"Now, it is obviously easier to recognise ideologies whenever they are strongly institutionalised or highly verbal. The true meaning of ideology for identity formation, however, can be fathomed only by descending into those transitory systems of conversion and aversion which exist in adolescence. Such implicit ideologies are often overtly and totally unideological; yet they often exist at the most vital point of a young persons or a groups life, as a basis for a tentative and yet total orientation in life, without knowledge or, indeed curiosity of the adults around them".

(ERIKSON, E. (1954; 68)

13 COHEN, A.K. (1955)

14 MATZA, D. (1964; 30-60)

Thus there are different modes of expression of commitment and belief and the sociologist as a political individual finds himself constantly tied to the more bourgeois forms of commitment involved in rationality, consistency and articulacy. However, any sociologist that forgets the existence of alternative sets of languages will soon be surprised by changes in actions of those he studied.

"The British Journal of Sociology for September 1966 carried a report of a study of the Luton Vauxhall workers by John Goldthorpe. It concluded that 'in spite of the deprivation which their jobs on the line may entail, these men will be disposed to maintain their relationship with their firm, and to define this more as one of reciprocity and interdependence than, say, one of coercion and exploitation'.

(B.J.S. Sept, 1966. John Goldthorpe; "Attitudes and Behaviour of Car Assembly Workers".) Goldthorpe informs us that 77% of the workers had a 'co-operative view of management' and the conditions in the plant were 'no longer likely to give rise to discontent and resentment of a generalised kind'. About a month after the publication of this report the Luton workers broke into open revolt. 2,000 workers tried to storm the management offices singing the Red Flag and calling "string him up" whenever a director's name was mentioned. (Times 19/10/66".)

(BLACKBURN, R. (1969; 2007)

So it is possible for Goldthorpe and Matza to carry out <sup>research based</sup> upon a universalistic conception of values in society and to discover by the use of classbound ideas and class-bound techniques that members of the working class believe in the values and norms of bourgeois society; but this

leaves them with the need to explain why these people act in such a way that is in contravention with their beliefs. For the delinquent does break rules, the workers do strike and the truant does not go to school just after a sociologist has elicited responses from them that they are in favour of private property, against strikes, and in favour of education.

However, if it is possible to appreciate the different languages used by different classes to express themselves, then it is possible to understand ideas like commitment and belief to be represented by different things within different classes. Indeed as Hintze has said "an ideology is an indispensable part of the life-process which is expressed in actions"<sup>15</sup> and to understand an ideology as purely expressed in words is insufficient.

Yet it is an important point to understand why certain values are regarded as universal, even if they represent only the norms of one group. The answer to this lies in the important point mentioned before about the interaction between classes.

"Why does one conception come to dominate the social perspective of the given community? How is the meaningful interpretation of action constituted? Democratically? Hardly. The channelling of interpreted meaning is class structured. It is formed through lived engagement in the predominant class - controlled institutions of society. What of the character of those institutions which more specifically pattern the development of socially shared meanings - mass media, schools etc. ... ~~The~~ The definition of activity, the share description of an act and the very meaning of the function of acting,

15 HINTZE, O. (1931; 232) Quoted in BENOIX (1959; 47)

are largely shaped through the production of power".  
(LICHTMAN, R. 1970; 79)

Thus the articulations that sociologists accept as the universal normative values of every member of the society can be located very firmly as the values of that section of society which has created a whole network of institutions one of whose major purposes is the insinuation of these values in every member of society. Barrington-Moore does communicate the atmosphere of these institutions (in the following extract);

"To maintain and transmit a value system, human beings are punched, balked, sent to jail, thrown into concentration camps, cajoled, bribed, made into heroes, encouraged to read newspapers, stood up against a wall and shot, and sometimes even taught sociology. To speak of cultural inertia is to overlook the concrete interests and privileges that are served by indoctrination, education and the entire complicated process of transmitting culture from one generation to the next."

(MOORE, 1966; 486)

Indeed for working class boys in Sunderland this does represent their experience of the pressures and violence perpetrated on them in order that a certain system of values should become universal guides for action. The aim of this thesis is to understand their experience within one such institution.

Thus this thesis is not simply informed by the existence of different classes, but also recognises the different languages used to communicate experience within these different classes. This recognition must always be kept in mind when interpreting empirical evidence concerning the

actions, beliefs and sentiments of the working class since the very act of expressing their communications in a different language raises difficulties in interpretation.

#### 4) EXPERIENCE

Throughout this discussion of theoretical strategies, about class, language and history, I have consistently used the word experience to describe a certain way of human being. The use of this word is deliberate and will be used throughout the thesis.

"Experience n. test, trial, experiment; practical acquaintance with any matter gained by trial; repeated trial; long and varied observation, personal or general; wisdom derived from the changes and trials of life; the passing through of any event or course of events by which one is affected; an event so passed through; anything received by the mind as sensation, perception or knowledge; v.t. to make trial of, or practical acquaintance with; to prove or know by one; to have experience of; to suffer to undergo<sub>16</sub> -

The process of experiencing the social world is for me one of the major components of sociology, it is easy to see why such a process has not been more widely used. For like the use of history, the use of experience presents great methodological problems, but like history these problems are less than those of ignoring it.

Most importantly 'experience' predetermines certain methodological problems that few sociologists have attempted to expound on.

"Natural science knows nothing of the relations between behaviour and experience. The nature of this relation ... is not an objective problem. There is no traditional logic to express it. There is no developed method of understanding its nature. But this relation is the copula of our science 'if science means a form of knowledge adequate to its subject'. The relation to experience and behaviour is the stone that builders will reject at their peril. Without it the whole structure of our theory and practice must collapse.

... perception, imagination, phantom, reverie, dreams, memory are simply different modalities of experience, none more 'inner' or 'outer' than any others".

(LAING, R. 1967; 17-18)

The only way that I have found to group the meaning of experiences is to attempt to understand phenomena in their totality as they are experienced in time and place. The alternative to this is to attempt to select aspects of experience as a whole or situational experiences and treat these as separate essences. There are two major methods of doing this that raise very great problems.

The first is perhaps the most bogus of the two which is an attempt to objectify social facts or experience;

"I use the term objectification to denote the observer and the actor attempts to convince the reader of the credibility of the properties or elements being attended and labelled 'data' for



purposes of making inferences and taking further action. To objectify some event or object or mood therefore is to convince someone that sufficient grounds exist or existed for making specifiable inferences about "what happened".

(CICOUREL (1968; 2. )

This is linked with the next section which discusses objectivity, but concerns us here because of the process rather than the reason behind the process. The process being the selection of certain parts of a social 'fact' or experience and the reason being to render the account within a certain set of meanings and to a certain end of persuading someone that the account is true. The selection of certain parts of experience has been one of the major methods of sociological research and has been criticised lucidly by Blumer and called "the scheme of sociological analysis which seeks to reduce human group life to variables and their relations". The extraction of one variable from the totality of a way of life then comes to stand for that way of life or experience and depending on the skill by which it is done is successful in becoming that way of life in the reader's mind.

The second technique is that of the use of metaphor, analogies or models. This starts off by saying that a certain activity is like the analogy or the metaphor (which may either be explicit or implicit).

"Thus it is, for them, a short step from saying society is like a biological organism, like a machine, like a big human being to saying it is each one of these. If the sociologists who forget the word 'like' ~~like~~ as they produce sociology, they would write using a telex (which is like a typewriter),

come to work in their <sup>pyjamas</sup> ~~pajamas~~ (which are like a suit), mark every corner with a cross (which is like the way human beings remember their route".  
(CORRIGAN, Philip R.D. (1972a; Appendix 3)

This represents more than an attack upon metaphor as explicitly used but together with Blumer represents a criticism of the way in which concepts come to stand for the experience of an individual and then becomes that experience. This is something that mystifies more than it illuminates since it nearly always comes to be treated and understood as if it was that experience. The importance of at least attempting to retain the experience of the individuals concerned as the unit of analysis immediately implies several methodological problems.

The models of what is the nature of sociological enquiry are many. This is not the place to enter into a *critique* of all of these models. What concerns me here is the development of a methodological model that directly locates a series of methods within the theoretical strategies that inform us. It is important then to have a mode of sociological enquiry that:

- a) Recognises that there are different distinct groups within society and that concepts of universals in terms of attitudes, values and experiences cloud; that there are different experiential problems for different sections of the population<sub>18</sub>.
- b) Recognises the way in which experiences and institutions can only be understood in terms of a process over time.
- c) Recognises that/<sup>a</sup>history of a different set of experiences creates a different way of communicating and that it is wrong to expect a consistent language over a

whole society.

d) Recognises the totality of experience of individuals that can only be understood as that totality.

18 The differences in the nature of these experiences cannot be overstated. Space does not allow a full investigation of the manner of these differences, but it is important.

"We worked in pits, steel works, foundaries, textiles, mills, factories. These were the obvious instruments of power and wealth. The question therefore did not form itself for us in some fashion as 'How can I buy myself a steel worker, or even part of one?' Such possibilities were too remote to have any practical impact".

(BEVAN, 1952; Chp. 1)

and to underline the background to these different experiences as well as the need for some historical situating of experiences -

"In view of all this, it is not surprising that the workingclass has become a race wholly apart from the English bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie has more in common with every other nation of the earth than with the workers in whose midst it lives. The workers speak other dialects, have other thoughts and ideals, other customs and moral principles, a different religion and other politics than those of the bourgeoisie. Thus they are two radically dissimilar nations as unlike as difference of race could make them".

(ENGELS, F. (1845; 157)

## THEORETICAL KEY TO THESIS

In writing this thesis I have discovered that it is insufficient to simply present the above 'theoretical maps' and then enter into the substance of the thesis and expect certain resulting ideas to emerge in every section. This is utopian. For in the section on education and the section on spare-time activity there are similar themes but these themes are not well communicated since they are within a substantive discussion of spare-time activities etc. Thus at this stage in the introduction I want to construct a theoretical statment which has in actuality been constructed through my experience of my research, but for the reader's sake these theoretical constructs must come before the reading of my research and act as a sort of key to that research.

The major concern of this work is with:

- 1) The working class boys experience and their values evolved through their experience.
- 2) the fact that these boys live in a society where the values that arise from their practical day-to-day experiences are not the values of those that control the major institutions in society
- 3) that these institutions and, in particular the school, were created by the individuals who control them, in an attempt to make their values universal
- 4) that these boys are forced by state power to attend those institutions which attempt to enforce bourgeois values
- 5) that a tension arises between the values and guides for action recommended by the school and the values and experiences of their everyday life.

It is at this point where the sociologist enters the situation to analyse the boys' behaviour, attitudes and values. He enters with an overall world view and life-style that is not that of the working class and therefore finds it difficult to perceive these tensions as tensions rooted (in one side) in working class experience. Unfortunately it is much easier both personally and methodologically for the sociologist to perceive purely the other side of this tension, that of the bourgeois values.

This is usually as true for Marxist scholars as for any other ideologists since they are looking for values and experiences articulated in a certain fashion. However, in some places this tension has been outlined.

"This is what the bourgeoisie and the State are doing for the education and improvement of the working class. Fortunately the conditions under which this class lives are such as give it a sort of practical training, which not only replaced school cramming, but renders harmless the confused religious notions connected with it. Necessity is the mother of invention, and what is still more important, of thought and action ... If he (the English Working Man) cannot write he can speak, and speak in public, if he has no arithmetic, he can, nevertheless, reckon with the Political Economists enough to see through a *Corn-Law* repeating bourgeois".

(ENGELS, 1962; 146-147)

and

"the working class is more likely to support deviant values if those values relate either to concrete everyday life or to vague populist concepts than

if they relate to an abstract political philosophy".  
(MANN, (1966; 432)

The sociologist does not then experience "the concrete everyday life of working class", its 'practical training', but does experience the bourgeois values that are being propagated through certain institutions. Thus, not surprisingly this becomes the focus of study. These values are taken as universal (see above) and as such become values that some people act on and some people don't. Deviancy has tended to be the study of why people hold certain values and act in certain ways which may be contradictory. For the purpose of this work the values of society will not be seen as universal but those values which are usually described as universal will be called bourgeois values and thus the problem of compliance or ~~none~~ compliance with them becomes a different problem.

For we would not expect individuals to act on values that they do not agree with, instead we would expect them to act on values that they do agree with. Rather the question behind this work is why they sometimes act in accordance with values that are not their own. This obviously presents the problem in a totally different light with different emphases, for it focuses the main spotlight on the forces that create compliance rather than those that created deviant action. One of these major forces are perhaps the dominant norm themselves but only one of these forces.

"Parsons' focus is not primarily on the manner in which the power of one actor may be controlled by the power of another but rather on the restraints that are placed on man's power by a moral code. But, if a decisive consideration for system stability is the

control of power, this it would seem can be done in various ways, moral constraints being only one of them".

(GOULDNER (1970; 244)

If one accepts that moral values is only one method of power and that what have been taken as dominant internalised values in society are only dominant because of the nature of the power of these individuals that hold them then one has a different model of compliance. If one also accepts that working class boys values evolve from their experience of the world which Klein et al describe as very different from that of other boys, then one has a method of compliance that is most obviously not one of internalised norms.

This piece of work is about a group of boys who experience the world through ideas and values that have evolved from their world. They come into contact with institutions that not only have different value systems but that are trying to change the boys value systems and actions. The interaction between these values is at the instigation of the institutions not at the boys. Thus at school, in youth clubs, in careers advisory centres and with the police the boy is under attack upon his values and his actions. He is under attack not simply by means of these values but by the power that is immanent in the institutions that have been created by the values. When he obeys these institutions he does so NOT because they embody values that he 'agrees' with, but because they have the power to enforce compliance. Values themselves are not important to the boys, they are important when they have a close relationship with power and sanctions.

The boys have to learn the lesson of Alice at school and on the streets,

"When I use a word" Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean. Neither more nor less".

"The question is" said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things".

"The question is" said Humpty Dumpty, "who is to be master. That is all".

(CARROL, L. 1962:274 )

#### SOME NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

The impossibility of a 'correct' methodology.

Faced with these theoretical maps it is indeed difficult to conceive of a perfect methodology that fits these prerequisites. However, it is vital to stress once more that this is not the way in which this three year research was carried out. There was no causal relationship between the theoretical strategies, rather the latter were worked out at the same time as the former.

Thus, for example, it will be seen in the chronology that in the summer of 1970 the focus of the research changed and enlarged. As a result of talking to the boys in the pilot I was told that for them the problems and difficulties of part of their life was having to go to school. This was in fact a new idea about the research as far as I was concerned, yet with regard to the theoretical maps above, it became important to research this experiential problem. It was understood in terms of a process over time of different classes of society, yet without trying to analyse the class structure as a thing apart from the peoples experience. For as Sartre has



written in criticism of Marxist methodology,

"This method does not satisfy us. It is a priori. It does not derive its concepts from experience - or at least not from the new experiences it seeks to interpret. It has already formed its concepts, it is already certain of their truth, it will assign to them the role of constitutive schemata. Its sole purpose is to force the events, the persons or the acts considered into prefabricated moulds".

(SARTRE, (1960; 37))

Any methodology used must only exist within the tensions of the above four theoretical maps, more it is impossible to satisfy them all in every way. So any methodology will reflect some parts of all of the above theoretical maps, and none will reflect all of them. For example, it is not possible to provide an analysis over time of the bourgeoisie in 19th Century England of the complexity of the discussion of experiences of one hundred Sunderland schoolboys and this leads to difficulties and possible mistakes. Yet NOT to understand the problem of having to go to school in either historical or class terms is to make it difficult to understand the boys experience. It may also be true that it is impossible to understand the totality of another persons experience of the world, given the different languages engaged in by researcher and researched, yet to recognise the impossibility of certain problems is not then to ignore them.

### Why Schools.

There are biographical, theoretical and methodological reasons why I chose the school as the area of experience that I was most interested in. Within the field of the

sociology of deviance and criminology the school was viewed almost universally up until the 1950s in a very distinct way.

It was seen basically as a buttress for society against the forces of delinquency. The role of education in society itself (as outlined in <sup>chapter</sup> ~~section~~ 3) was accepted within criminology. School was accepted as stopping delinquency rather than in anyway having a generative effect.

Cohen, A. (1955) in formulating the subcultural theory (outlined in <sup>chapter</sup> ~~section~~ 2) focused his attention upon the school as an institution that played a part not in the suppression of deviant action but in its generation. However he maintained the idea of a dominant value system that the school succeeded in getting the boys to internalise. Whilst my criticisms of this will be explained elsewhere it is important here to note the way in which the school was conceptualised for the first time as an institution creating problems for the boys - despite the different nature of the problems outlined this represented a considerably different way of looking at the school as regard to delinquent activity. Similarly the nature of the school as an institution above ideology was brought into question.

Within the sociology of education (outlined more fully in <sup>chapter</sup> ~~section~~ 3) this last process was shown to happen. It is only very recently (with the exception of WALLER (1924) and GOODMAN (1950) that any sociologists have begun seriously questioning the ideology of education. So it was within the sociology of delinquency that the school became first studied as an institution that was generating deviancy rather than normality.

Hargreaves (1969) in the U.K. and Werthmann (1966) in the U.S. followed up Cohen's lead within the framework of Cohen's theory. Whilst I disagree a great deal with Hargreaves' work I must acknowledge that his book was published at such a time as to direct my own and the British sociology of deviance's eyes towards the school as a generating milieu of delinquency. Downes (1965) had pointed to the school as an important factor for the younger boys in his study.

In a different tradition but still looking at the school as an institution Powers' (1972) research was looking at the relationship between school and delinquency in Tower Hamlets.

This emphasis on the school and its relationship to delinquent activity was of very great importance in formulating the original focus of my research, in 1969, since given the methodological formulations I had at that time I was interested in looking for institutions that caused carried delinquent activity. As is outlined in the chronology of the research this approach changed. It changed because I became to realise the complete impossibility of looking for the causes of delinquent behaviour, both from the point of view of causation and delinquency. Causation became impossible for me to use as a concept now I had fully understood the implications of the new interactionist theorists, yet more importantly the idea of focusing attention upon delinquent action also became impossible. This was because I took seriously BECKER (1963) and other attempts to turn attention away

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19 BECKER (1963; 1964); LEMERT (1967); MATZA (1964; 1969)

20 This obviously goes back to the methodology recommended by the original Chicago School.

from delinquent behaviour as apart from the total way of life of the people involved. Thus one had to study the total way of life of these boys rather than simply those sections of their life that were classified delinquent.

The nature of the research changed from that of the study of the school as a cause of delinquent behaviour to a study of the experiences of working class boys with especial emphasis upon the school and on spare-time activity.

Alongside these considerations within the sociology of deviance that had led me to the school, were the ideas outlined in my theoretical maps. Obviously my interest was very likely to be in those areas where the tensions between working class experience and bourgeois values could be found. Equally, given my background in the study of social policy, I was likely to be interested in those areas where the tensions came into being in institutions created as deliberate instruments of social policy; so the school was once more the obvious choice.

There were certain obvious methodological advantages contained in a study of working class boys experience (the disadvantages are also great and will be outlined below). Most obviously, if I am interested in the boys experience of school then it is better to actually see them and talk to them within that institution, where their words about action will be most likely to be linked with their actual action in the real life situation. This does of course detract from the validity of their words about their spare-time activities, but this was a choice that had to be made.

Similarly the school provides the methodological advantage of creating a 'captive sample'. The researcher gains access to the school via the education officer and

the headmaster and once in this situation one is free to research for as long as you want. You can generally depend upon the boys to be there when you want them and the response is likely to be high.

So within the intellectual tradition of the sociology of deviance within my own ideas and for strictly practical considerations the school became the major area of the study. Ideally though I would like to have also carried out research in the streets.

The street, as outlined in ~~Section~~ <sup>Chapter</sup> 4, provides the working class boys with his own institution. Thrasher (1927) and Whyte (1943) found that the street provides the freest atmosphere to carry out research using participant observation since it provides the boys with the greatest room for manoeuvre, in that he can refuse to take part, restructure the whole atmosphere of the research. This provides a much greater credence to the data as has been well outlined by Polskey (1971). Thus provided the research succeeds at all and the researcher is accepted then he finds it easier to write meaningfully about the experience since his 'data' is much more total.

Despite Becker (1964) and Polskey (1971; Chp. 3) outlines of the problems of participant observation, there are some difficulties that are a bit too banal for them to mention, yet are of great importance to any understanding of methodology. To use an extreme, but possible example; if a Scandinavian white female were interested in the activities of black American homosexuals she would not be able to use participant observation, or at least it would severely change the situation from the normal all black homosexual one. Yet these physical given attributes are obviously important, since they can easily ruin a research

project. Should, therefore, only those sociologists who can fit into social situations study those situations? This is an obvious solution but one that would greatly restrict the scope of possible sociological research, and increase the number of studies on white bourgeois academics! Importantly though, this problem does mean that participant observation is out for many situations including mine. For, whilst my background was similar to those of the boys in Sunderland there were many crucial differences. Most importantly I am 6 ft. 4 inches, very large and from London and these boys were 5 ft. northerners. Standing on a corner with these boys would have drastically altered their activities amongst themselves as well as their interactions with others, e.g. the police. Literally I stood out as a stranger and could no more have fitted into the background as the white Scandinavian lady in Haarlem gents toilet. This may seem banal but a 5 ft. 2 inch male sociologist would have had much greater access to the spare-time activities of these boys. Instead all my research activity took place in or near the school.

#### WHY IN SUNDERLAND AND WHY THOSE SCHOOLS

Most obviously I was restricted to an area within easy reach of Durham University. Also I was interested in an urban working class community to get to understand the boys actions, activity and experience of life. Thus I chose Sunderland, on the coast and about 18 miles from Durham. It is impossible to provide the reader with a picture of Sunderland in a hundred thousand words let alone a few hundred.

"Sunderland is a town which is living on the dwindling fat of its Victorian expansion. The legacy of the Industrial Revolution is apparent in its appearance, its physical structure, its population growth and in a host of social and economic characteristics. Even (sic) attitudes are coloured by its past heritage. The Depression years, the final death spasm of the 19th Century is a pre-Keynesian era, are still a real memory amongst much of the towns population and impinge upon the attitudes of the working population. This imprint of the past, rooted in a continuing dependence on heavy industry, is found to a much greater degree than in the towns of the midlands or even Lancashire, since the spread of light manufacturing has had only marginal effects in the North-East".

(ROBSON, 1969; 75)

The problem of differences caused by location are completely impossible to overcome, for the North-East of England is so obviously unique as to be idiosyncratic in the extreme. Yet this idiosyncrasy is impossible to spell out since it consists of one hundred years of what Robson refers to as its heritage.

The two areas of Sunderland that contain the two schools need a brief introduction. Tavistock council estate that contains Municipal Comprehensive School is a large post world-war II estate upon the outskirts of Sunderland. Like (and unlike) a hundred others throughout the country on the fringes of conurbations. The estate is totally a council house estate of two-storey buildings, although it is built around a service area of shops and four-storey flats that pre-date the estate. The area

immediately strikes me as a working-class area yet if the person that saw it for the first time had any conception of a hierarchy then they would place Tavistock estate near the bottom of that hierarchy with regard to the rest of society.

On the other hand this person would say that Municipal Comprehensive School was one of the best and newest comprehensive schools in the country. It has got a tremendous range of facilities when compared to the average secondary school. It has a headmaster who is a fairly well-known educationist and the staff have been handpicked by him. He told me however that the catchment area for the school had been specially drawn to only include two non-council houses and both of those were occupied by Catholic Priests! Despite this homogeneity though I would believe that physically Municipal Comprehensive School was one of the best comprehensive schools in the country.

The area where Cunningham secondary modern school was situated was very different. This was an older area; late Victorian, most of the housing stuck between a main road and beside the sea (yet crucially NOT at the sea-side). Whilst being very different from Tavistock estate it did, in fact, similarly compel the observer to label it working-class.

The school was very different. Cramped in poor conditions, a typical school board school with high Victorian rooms with poor lighting. A noisy class in this school could be heard over half the school. The headmaster (as will be outlined below) did not seem very co-operative and so I could never get to know this school as well.



Importantly I knew a teacher at Municipal Comprehensive and I knew a teacher that had taught at Cunningham. Both of them helped me a great deal with background information and in the case of the one still teaching while I was doing research, with continuing help. They were obviously a factor in making my choice, but most importantly, I wanted to carry out most of the research in a school that was physically well endowed and in one that was not, though both were in working class areas. This was not done in order to carry out a fully fledged comparative study, rather to see if, along with the major research project, there were any interesting differences. Crucially as far as my research could tell the boys at both schools had very very similar experiences of school and differed, significantly, throughout the whole thesis only on the matter of their five favourite pop groups!

#### CHOOSING RESEARCH METHODS WITHIN A SCHOOL

##### 1) Teaching in the School - filling a role

Research is best carried out in most activities where the researcher can fit into the institution as unobtrusively as possible. Importantly though as far as the school is concerned there is only one major participant role open to the researcher - that of teacher. Whether an individual researcher chooses to accept this opportunity betrays totally the ideas that the researcher has about the social organisation of the school. Hargreaves chose to accept the opportunity.

"The writer spent a complete year at the school.

For the first two terms he was present for the whole school day. He taught all the fourth year boys at some stage, as well as other year-groups; he observed the

pupils in lessons conducted by all the teachers; he administered questionnaires and conducted interviews; he used every available opportunity for informal discussion with the boys; he accompanied them on some official school visits and holidays; he joined them in some of their out-of school activities. In a word the researcher entered the school as a participant-observer, armed with his own training and teaching experience and with the intention of examining the behaviour and attitudes of boys in the school and their relationships with the teachers and one another". (HARGREAVES, 1969; IX)

Indeed this portrays an involvement of much greater nature than my own, specifically because of the entree provided by the role of teacher. However, Hargreaves does attempt to get the best of both worlds since at the end of the book in a lucid section on participant observation he admits that after one term of teaching the teacher-role had destroyed any possible relationship with the lower stream boys because,

"Within organisations such as schools, factories, hospitals and prisons a distinction can (sic) be made between the 'controllers' (teachers, managers, doctors and warders) and the 'controlled' (pupils, workers, patients and prisoners). Between these two levels yawns the gap of status distinction which a participant observer cannot necessarily bridge".

(HARGREAVES, 1969; 204)

I would say that in the school this gap was impossible to bridge and that Hargreaves' experience backs this up, that it was only when he had actively refused the teacher role that the boys had any trust for him at all. The

process of trust evolved completely negates the role of teacher by a number of trying out mechanisms. What happens if a boy smokes? What happens if a boy swears? etc. All of these activities would not even be tried if the researcher was a teacher.

## 2) The creation of ambiguity

However, as Hargreaves says "Any adult (who is not dressed as a workman) appearing in the school must in their eyes have some strong connection with the teaching profession" <sup>(1967; 201)</sup> so to obtain the trust of the boys this strong <sup>25</sup> connection must be severed and must be severed obviously.

For Hargreaves this was difficult as it seemed important to him to be understood and have the co-operation of the staff of the school. This led to maintaining the link with the teaching profession, with the staff and severing with the pupils. At the start of the research my perception of this gap was that it was very wide and unbridgeable, that in fact one researcher could not gain the trust of both teachers and the boys, and whilst this would limit the scope of any research project such a choice is vital. There are research situations, like many social situations, that straight away need the choice of which side the researcher is on. This creates difficulties in personal terms in research situations where one side may end up distrusting and perhaps hating the researcher who is obviously committed to the other group.

Since my own research was primarily the boys' experiences of the school rather than the total organisation of the institution, it meant that I had to choose the boys as the group whose trust I wanted. This created problems with the teachers. For since in the boys perception of the school there was no role that adults are allowed to play

apart from that of teacher I had to create a role that they did not find threatening. This meant that there had to be a total ambiguity in the teacher's perception of me, since if they had totally rejected me, they could have together with the headmaster, ~~have~~ stopped my research. Yet, if they had accepted me this would have meant they may have talked extensively to me within sight of the boys and may have <sup>ruined</sup> ~~exhorted~~ the boys to co-operation with me. Such behaviour may have jeopardised the boys trust, so an ambiguous stance was adopted to the teachers.

This was not a difficult strategy to adopt. Firstly because I did not have any clear hypothesis to put to teachers when they said "what are you doing". Secondly because I was scared of the teachers. Entering a staff-room is not an easy set of social situation, so I spent as much time as possible away from the teachers and the staff-room.

I was introduced to the schools by way of a letter from Dr. Cohen (~~see appendix 1~~). This followed an interview with the Deputy Education Officer, who seemed to see my intention as a technician that was offering assistance. He was concerned with the problem of vandalism and looked to me to provide the Corporation with possible solutions to the problem. I carried out the pilot at Municipal School and was introduced to the headmaster by means of the ambiguous researcher role. He believed, as did the staff, that I was "interested in the experience of the last year of school", which was of course true. Whilst the staff accepted this it was mainly interpreted, once more, as a purely technical piece of research to help them in the Raising of the School Leaving Age. I feel that I posed little threat to the staff except as someone

odd. Thus for most of the staff the ambiguity did not need resolution since I posed little threat to them.

For the boys, however, given the extent to which I required their ideas and words, it was important to be unambiguous. This led to certain mundane difficulties, such as wearing ones hair short enough to be ambiguously decent to the staff, yet long enough to be unambiguously not on the staff side. Similarly with dress.

In Municipal School when the final research came to be done boys knew that I had carried out my pilot the year before. When they started answering the questionnaires several of the boys asked worriedly about whether the teachers would see the answers. I said 'no' and I had said at the beginning that everything was confidential, that I'd put the questionnaires in my bag when they had finished them, and would keep them with me. One boy then said that I was all right because two of his mates "Nanker and Phelge" from the year before had talked to me and I hadn't let them down by getting them wronged. The words of Nanker and Phelge did change the atmosphere in my favour.

Thus I carried out certain strategies to get the boys trust, but these were not deceptive strategies since I was indeed feeling easier with the boys than with the teachers for they represented my sentiments, interests and aspects of my biography. Yet this itself would not have been sufficient to place much weight upon their trust without the important factor of my perceived role.

I told them on every occasion that I was writing a book about them; that I was interested in them; that they were the reason I was at the school; that I wanted things expressed as much as possible in their language and I didn't care about spelling, or grammar, or talking proper. This

had a very important effect. Not only did it resolve the ambiguity about my role in the school in that I became Paul Corrigan who was writing a book about them, but as importantly I became defined as interested in them. I was going to write what they said and on many occasions the boys were rather hurt that they should do the talking and I should get the money for the book. So it became defined in several ways as their book as they had an investment in it.

This then provided the background which enabled me to understand the boys in any way, for on their part they had to trust me and in my part, before I carried out the main part of the research I had to realise what the major areas of their experience were. This was achieved, as was described above, by the pilot research that completely changed the nature of my project.

#### A NOTE ON COMMITMENT AND VALUES IN THE RESEARCH ACT

The boys walked into the classroom and I started talking and giving out the questionnaires. I told them I was Paul Corrigan and that they could call me Paul; that I was interested in what they thought of school and what they did with their spare time. I told them I was writing a book about what they thought because I was fed up with reading books about what teachers thought. So I wanted them to answer the questions in their own words. I pointed to my briefcase and said that I would put the lists of questions and answers in there and keep it with me and then take it out of the school. That no teacher would see them and that they would be confidential. Immediately one boy asked how much I'd earn from the book and if they'd get any. I said that I wouldn't get much and that I'd

have to keep my wife and myself on that. Someone said "are you sure that its all right to put what we think" (this was asked a few times before the above event occurred) and if they could swear. Throughout the procedure the boys slowly became rowdier and noisier until towards the end I was very scared that a teacher would come in and complain. Nevertheless I didn't say anything but tried to laugh along with them. On one occasion in a lab. the boys nearly succeeded in gassing us all, but I didn't tell them to shut up or behave. This created some feelings of amazement in the boys.

Much has been written on values in deviancy research (Becker 1967; 1971), (GOULDNER, 1968), (TAYLOR, I. and WALTON, P. 1971) and (COHEN, 1971) and yet in as far as my relationship with these boys was concerned I felt little of these problems. POLSKY (1971; 140) has expressed this best, "our society as present seems plentifully supplied with moral uplifters in any case, so one needn't worry if a few sociological students of crime fail to join with the chorus". In contact with the boys in Sunderland I felt no compunction to join the chorus denouncing their activities, instead I found them to be close to my own background and experience and THEREFORE totally free of reprehension.

In my view the teachers have enough exponents of their perception of the situation, as do the educationists, the police and the youth leaders. This does not mean that I lack sympathy with them but means that I knew I could not write from their viewpoint and that of the boys from the beginning and had to take sides.

Within these schools there are at least two conflicting realities, those of the pupil and the teacher;

it has been a difficult enough task to write about one, I believe it would not be possible for one person to carry out research into them both at once.

#### METHODS USED

##### 1) Questionnaires (see appendix)

These were administered by myself to groups of boys in both schools. Owing to administrative difficulties I could not get the 60 boys from Municipal School and the 45 from Cunningham. Instead I gave the questionnaires to 48 from Municipal and 45 from Cunningham. I asked the headmasters to provide me with boys who were most probably leaving that year, and in answer to all the other more specific questions that they asked about the selection of the boys I simply answered that I wanted a 'cross-section'. It is possible that headmaster A would have selected his 40 best early leavers to impress me with his school and headmaster B could have chosen the worst 40 from his school in order to show his tremendous difficulties. If I were going to carry out complete statistical tests on the data I would have had to select my own boys randomly but at no stage did I want to unduly anger or worry the heads. Both in fact did say that the boys selected represented their year quite well; both warned me that there were several terrors and horrors in the group; both said that there were some 'good lads' in it.

I gave the questionnaires to the boys preceded by the patter above. There are a variety of different techniques in the questionnaires, but in the pilot I realised the tremendous difficulties involved in the collection of ideas from people whose articulations are not expressed in the same way as the researcher - who would normally be



labelled 'inarticulate'. Many of these boys found difficulty in writing at all and some of them just didn't write anything or answer any questions. All the time I said that I didn't mind about writing or sentences and one word would do in the sentence completion. When it came to the self-report delinquency survey none of the boys showed any concern; the only concern was over the questions like 'I think teachers are .....' where a great deal of checking up was always done (e.g. "Are you SURE you won't show Mr. X"). But overall the questionnaire was designed to provide a spread of different methods of articulation. The fact that they were given out to groups of boys gave them considerable confidence, in that they never seemed threatened by me or the questions when they were surrounded by their mates. This of course was not the same in the interview.

#### Why these specific questions?

I divided the questionnaire into two since I felt that the boys would get very fed up after sixty or so questions. Since I wanted to know about a whole range of things, I felt that if I left the questions about football and spare-time activities to a second questionnaire, their interest might be revived by this. However, it must be said that there was a tendency for the number of 'No' answers to questions to increase towards the end. Indeed given the chaos during the administration of the questionnaires it was surprising that there was not a much greater number of 'no' answers! The boys could not be described as 'well behaved' during the filling in of the questionnaires, but that in itself is a comment upon the substance of the research as well as its methodology.

Questionnaire 1 - What young people think about school  
Questions 1-4 - These questions specifically attempted to recreate ~~live~~ situations in the form of (for 1 and 3) a yes/no answer; and (for 2 and 4) an explanation. Instead of asking Do you like school? I wanted to give the boys a chance to create a real situation in their imagination and answer the question with respect to that feeling. The answers to these questions provided an overall perception of the boys experience of school.

Questions 5-8 - These questions attempted to discover what were the most important subjects at school for the boys. This question betrays the shifting theoretical background of the research, in that, in the early stage I would have thought that more boys would have mentioned that they liked 'practical subjects' since I felt that it was these subjects that were important to their school experience. This sort of question is still trying to discuss the school in the terms that, for example, I experienced it. An institution which is based around 'subjects'. If, however, one has a concept of school as a social control experience then the liking or disliking of 'subjects' is of a lot less importance. The answers to these questions proved useless, if one gives them some thought. A boy could like English because he likes the book that they are reading at the moment, he likes the teacher, he likes the fact that English is on Friday afternoon etc. Similarly for his dislikes.

Questions 9-12 on the relationship between school experience and jobs were similarly of little use. Their distance from the boys experience was too great. Once more it was based upon the idea that school was experienced as useful, and this was not necessarily so.

Questions 13 and 14 were about the length of time that the boys had lived in the area and as such, were echoes from the positivist past. It may well have been very simple to have 'shown' that 90% of boys who wanted to leave Sunderland also hated school ... However, by the time that I came to analyse these questions they merely provided useful background to the section on physical movement on the chapter on 'careers'.

Questions 15-23 were about the boys perceptions of their future employment. Obviously all the questions were about expectations and some of them made the mistake of discussing ideas of planning and choice. The section on future employment contains its own discussion of the methodology employed here. For the moment it is sufficient to say that this represented an attempt to come to grips with the 'aspiration' argument, central to various sociological theories of delinquency.

Questions 24-26 were about truancy by a friend, to try and gauge response to that situation. Would the boys say that it was wrong or would he go along with his friend?

Question 26 was to try and ascertain the extent to which the teacher was experienced as approachable and helpful or the extent to which the boys kept themselves to themselves when they had a choice.

Questions 27-38 were a simplistic check-list of statements that lacked commitment for the person answering but still was constructed to provide the boys with sufficient scope to betray either a consistent pro-discipline or anti-discipline line. Unfortunately this degree of 'consistency' is not now part of my theoretical expectations, since it does not allow one to cry inconsistency if it fails but simply to point a consistency of a different nature from that of the researcher.

Questions 39-45 were about punishment and discipline as experienced and expected by the boys. These proved useful and would be expanded in any replication using a wider variety of different sorts of questions.

Questions 46-61. Despite the difficulty of about half the boys in expressing themselves in sentences this sentence completion test was undoubtedly the most popular. Here the boys said that they put what they wanted to and the vigour of their answers throughout betrays their enthusiasm. This section took the longest time; but disappointingly question 55 'The teachers think I am' proved too painful (and in the pilot interview when I asked it again, one could see the difficulty and indeed pain of the question) for most boys to answer. So it has been dropped from the analysis.

#### Questionnaire 2 - Leisure activities of young people

Questions 1-6 specifically about the boys involvement with football from the general viewpoint of interest; to going to Roker Park; to buying magazines and reading Sunday papers; including the acid test of Saturday afternoon at 5 o'clock that most football fans spend glued to T.Vs and radios. There were also questions about involvement in playing football.

Questions 8-23 were again a simple check list of activities, that did not prove very useful except for purely ethnographic interest of the nature of 85% of boys like reading comics and only 25% like reading books. But such data does not fit easily into a text that tries to understand in some depth the life experiences of boys.

Questions 24-42 could be similarly criticised. This is a familiar self-report delinquency survey that contains a four-choice answer. My impression was that the boys

showed a great deal less worry about showing me their answers to these questions than their answers to questions about school. However, this provides ethnographic detail which goes directly AGAINST the whole section on spare-time activities. For delinquency and rule-breaking is not a thing apart. Nevertheless to be fair this was the only way that this data could be collected given the above remarks on the impossibility of participant observation. Questions 43-51 were attempts to discover the boys involvement in pop music. As is outlined in the part on pop music in Section 4 the essential question of the meaning of this music to the boys cannot be answered through this small part of a research project. The meaning of a hard rock tune to a 14 year old Sunderland boy is too much to expect from a study mainly based on other experiences so I have kept the discussion to a simple involvement or non-involvement in institutions. Questions 52-56 were the most abortive of the whole research. As a quarter-hearted attempt to discover the boys home background they are inexcusable. Since this is what was intended I find them now rather embarrassing, they represent an attempt to try and extend the research beyond the possible given my limited time and energy. Whilst the research would have been undoubtedly improved given some contact with the boys home background there was never sufficient time and in my case I was afraid of jeopardising the boys trust by seeing their parents.

Overall it may well appear that I am most unsatisfied with my own questionnaire, and this is true, not so much because I have changed my theoretical standpoint or that I am bad at drawing up questionnaires, rather that I always realised the great limitations on questionnaires

for providing anything else other than background material. In fact they made the whole set of interviews possible since they provided not only information but also cues and insights that were invaluable.

b) Interview

Each boy who came to me for an interview which was tape-recorded in the careers room of <sup>MUNICIPAL</sup> 'P' school. The <sup>27</sup> interviews were carried out individually and were preceded by the two caveats, "Remember what I said about that list of questions well noone's got into trouble over that and the same goes for the interview, its all confidential" and "You remember I was interested in young people in Sunderland, well I want to ask a few more questions ...". There then followed a loosely structured interview which veered back to a list of questions that I had in front of me.

27 It is important to explain why I interviewed all the boys in one school and not any in the other. In most research many methodological considerations are not to do with a theoretical/intellectual point but to do with the mechanisms of the project. Thus the headmaster of <sup>TAVISTOCK</sup> 'C' <sup>CUNNINGHAM</sup> school was not very pleased at the prospect of me being there very often with a tape-recorder and might have stopped me from doing the interviews half-way through. Also in comparing the results from the questionnaires there was in fact no statistically different set of results between the schools in any questions (with the exception of the favourite pop groups). This was of course surprising, but given the nature of the main interest of the research (i.e. the experience of boys rather than the organisation of the school) I felt that time and energy would be better

invested in getting to understand one institutional setting. Thus there were two reasons for restricting the interviews to <sup>MUNICIPAL</sup> 'P' school; one was a purely intellectual/methodological one and the other was practical.]

It must be said immediately that different boys acted in different ways to this interview and I would make one major proviso about the whole thesis, that it probably misses some very vital points about the less 'confident' boy. He seemed to find the whole idea of talking to me difficult. Obviously every boy was effected by this situation but some found it very difficult indeed and gave very short answers. Of the 47 interviews (one boy broke his leg the day before I was going to interview him which certainly expresses a fairly intense fear of the interview situation), I would say that about 20% of the boys were frightened by the situation and 20% of them were totally at ease. The remainder were on a continuum.

This is obviously unfortunate because it represents a basically unusual situation for the boys, and as such will refract the information in some way. However all the physically and culturally different researcher can do is be conscious of these problems ALL the time and work with the methods available. Indeed the whole enterprise is problematic.

#### Interview questions asked

There was a set of questions that I asked every boy, yet I always digressed if I felt the boy wanted to whilst attempting to return to the questions whenever possible. In this way most boys were asked the questions listed in the appendix though they may have varied for particular

boys. Therefore the questions is always given before every response in the text since there may have been an idiosyncratic question asked.

The topics of the questioned followed the ones in the questionnaire, in some cases asking the same question to see if a fuller response could be elicited, which was very often the case.

#### c) Diaries

In an attempt to understand more fully the way the boys spent their spare-time, and given the impossibility of participant observation, I asked them to fill in a diary of the things they did every day for a week. This had little success and given a response rate of only 20% I didn't feel able to use any material from the diaries as explicit data. The idea of the diaries came from Willmott (196 ) who had greater success with the method. However, he paid £2 to every boy that completed a diary which I am sure helped his response rate. I felt that a reward of any sort would have caused trouble at the school so I decided to leave it to the boys.

I think that the small response rate is once more to do with the difficulties of researching into a life style which does not possess the modes of articulacy associated with our own life style. Indeed the very idea of diaries took a lot of explaining to these boys and I felt convinced that very few of them had filled in a diary of their own ever. Thus it was an alien activity that they had little involvement in and most boys lost theirs I should think within the first few days.

#### d) General Observation about methods/methodology

In an introduction it is difficult to maintain the depth



of analysis about the theoretical maps, methodology and finally the methods. For it is always tempting to write about the actual methods of research in a much more crisp way - to say simply that the methods of this research were questionnaires and in-depth interviews. However, this does not represent the way in which the research was carried out since it must be said that, methodologically, I lived my research for three years; it is true that at certain times I did administer questionnaires and I did carry out interviews, but these are mentioned only because they are easier to identify. Just as important were the other methods; of being in the school talking to boys informally at lunch break; of reading about schools and talking with teachers and sociologists about education; of attempting to write historically about the education system; of reading about Chinese and Cuban education over the whole three years. Also most importantly (for the reader) has been the ten months used writing the thesis up, reading and talking about the subject, using what could be called reflexive sociology. All of these are methods of great importance for the end product.

"Towards an anarchist methodology"

21

In case this should appear to represent a totally coherent picture of a three year research project there are even a few more imponderables to disturb the picture. The vagaries of place have already been mentioned but some of the things I had in mind should be mentioned; for example the boys might be effected by the distance of Sunderland from London that means only first rate and tenth rate pop groups play there; or the nearness of the sea might change

their patterns of behaviour more; or the fact that Sunderland A.F.C. are in the 2nd division of the football league; all these things might make Sunderland totally different; it would be impossible to isolate them and find out.

Similarly, and I would think more importantly, is the location of the research in time. The years 1969-72 were eventful years for both the boys and myself. It is not possible to say, for instance, whether Sunderland A.F.C.s relegation in May 1970 had a greater effect upon the boys than the massive increase in male unemployment. What effect does the television news of Northern Ireland have on these boys; does it mean anything to them, as distinct from their elder and younger brothers, that they can see barricades on the streets of the U.K. or that British policemen and troops can be shot? What differences have the Child and Young Persons Act made to this cohort as compared to their elder brothers? All these things will have effected their lives and have also affected the way in which I have carried out the research and make any research idiosyncratic. Such things must always be at the forefront of our mind in reading and writing up research projects for whilst their resolutions may not be possible a recognition of their existence is very important.

Despite this I continued with the study and wrote it up, knowing that it wouldn't be exact; it wouldn't be coherent; and hoping that it would open doors rather than arriving at a watertight closure of a topic. Given all these recognitions of these impossibilities outlined in the 20,000 words above it is a wonder perhaps that I bothered yet most importantly as Mao has said,

"You can't solve a problem? Well get down and

investigate the present facts and its past history!  
When you have investigated a problem you will know  
how to solve it. Only a blockhead cudgels his brains  
on his own or together with a group to 'find a  
solution' or 'evolve an idea' without making an  
investigation. It must be stressed that this cannot  
possibly lead to any effective solution or any good  
ideas".

MAO-TSE TUNG; ~~Oppose~~ Book Worship (1930; 2)

## Organisation of the remainder of the thesis

If one tries to write up a three year research project with any honesty it is an appallingly difficult task. The usual organisation into three major sections (A. THEORY AND METHODS; B. HARD DATA; C. SOME IMPRESSIONS) leaves the reader with a false impression of all the loose ends being sown up. Yet it is not possible to simply expect anyone to read over 100,000 words. Therefore, inevitably, every organisation has some 'rationality' and some merely ad hoc reasoning. I have tried not to have a very rigid demarkation between theory and empirical work, but inevitably this has crept in. The following is the way in which the research has been organised.

### SECTION A INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 Why research into 'secondary education' and 'juvenile delinquency'?

Chapter 2 What is culture?

### SECTION B THE LAST YEAR AT SCHOOL IN SUNDERLAND

Chapter 3 Education institutions as guerilla warfare.

Chapter 4 The Dialectics of 'doing nothing' and 'getting into trouble'.

Chapter 5 The Problem of future work

### SECTION C CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 6 New questions for sociology; new problems for the state.

There will be a bibliography after each chapter.

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CHAPTER TWO - WHAT IS CULTURE?

WHY A SECTION ON CULTURE?	78 -
CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF DELINQUENCY	79 - 89
THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE - A WAY OF UNIVERSALISING DIFFERENCES	87 - 92
PATHOLOGY AND DIVERSITY	93 - 95
CRITICISMS OF COHEN	95 - 107
SOCIOLOGY OF WORKING CLASS CULTURE - AN EXAMPLE OF PATHOLOGICAL SOCIOLOGY	108 - 115
'BRITISH WORKING CLASS CULTURE' AND 'SUB- CULTURAL THEORY' THE CONSTRUCTION OF SUB- STANTIVE CONCEPTS TO UNDERSTAND CULTURAL ACTION	115 - 119
BIBLIOGRAPHY	120 - 122

## WHY A SECTION ON CULTURE?

In spelling out the theoretical strategies contained in Section One I tried to show I was interested in the totality of experience of being a 15 year old in Sunderland even if within this understanding of a total way of life I spend most of the research and thesis concentrating on aspects of this totality. For those separate areas of their lives are experienced as a totality rather than as discrete entities in segregated boxes. Consequently in those areas of their life that I was especially interested in, school and spare-time activity (delinquency) I put the most stress upon those studies and theories already carried out by sociologists that tried to understand these experiences within the context of a total way of life rather than discrete actions. Thus there is a need to elucidate both the substance and base of these studies of ways of life which is why the thesis includes a whole section upon culture.

For this reason there is a discussion of the history of the concept of culture with what I have styled as the major internal contradiction of its use between pathology and diversity. This different basic use of the concept will then be outlined in the substantive areas of delinquency studies and working class culture. Rather than a total discourse on the literature in these areas this section will follow the first one in discussing mainly those studies that have informed my own. In the following sections there are fuller reviews of other studies that I found less useful. Thus this section covers those studies ~~which~~, though engaged in a different kind of sociological enterprise, have proved useful to my own enterprise. It does attempt to meet the requirement

of fitting my research into some form of framework of other studies of culture; to show the continuities between Cohen's (1955) work and my own as well as the differences spelt out in the criticisms.

Having discussed the other specific uses of culture to understand ways of life I will try and outline my own set of ideas which must stand for the use of culture throughout the thesis. This will stress the diversity of cultural patterns as a reaction to different problems of living.

- 1 There is a general discussion of the relationship between the delinquent process and the totality of spare-time activity in Chapter Four. Whilst it may seem that something of this importance should be discussed earlier the nature of this relationship is one that is much better established by the use of my empirical material.

#### CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF DELINQUENCY

The use of the idea of culture to discuss the actions of working class male youth that contravene law, was actively discussed by the Chicago school. Whyte (1943), Thrasher (1927), Shaw and McKay (1931) all discussed the cultural nature of delinquent behaviour. Whyte found two different cultural adjustments to the human condition of the slum by working class youth. These two styles were very different, one being the college boy who was upwardly mobile, ambitious, oriented towards education as a means of self-betterment and therefore removal from the conditions. The corner boys on the other hand have accepted their lower

class life and were content to remain in their structural position, even though it was this cultural group that were the cause of trouble in terms of delinquent acts.

Importantly both of these responses were seen as learnt cultural sets of behaviour arising from areas of the city. Similarly, Thrasher, Shaw and McKay attributed "the persistence of juvenile delinquency in 'delinquency areas' to the existence of a delinquent tradition or culture which persisted irrespective of demographic change". Importantly though the origins of the pathological forms of culture were never discussed, rather they were interested in how the culture was taken on by the child. The delinquent norms preceded the child and as he grew older commanded his compliance. It was never clear whether these norms were created by the actual city zone or area or where else they could have come from.

The other major theme of studies of delinquency before the war was Merton's (1938) anomic theory. This is extensively discussed in ~~Chapter~~ Five of the thesis, it is important here though because of the effect it had upon the later subcultural theorists. Based upon the Durkheimian idea of anomie Merton characterised American society as anomic because it placed too much stress upon the goals of society to the exclusion of the correct means. This leads to the creation of illegitimate means. At the moment the criticisms of this theory are unimportant, what matters here is the injection of yet another universalist based set of ideas into the theory of juvenile delinquency. This led to greater stress upon the pathological nature of the study of subculture since it presupposed a common value system and common ideas about correct actions.



It was Cohen (1955) though that introduced in a more systematic way the concept of culture into studies of delinquency, and I will go into this at some length. It is important to start with Cohen's view of the nature of social action.

'Our point of departure is the 'psychogenic' assumption that all human action - not delinquency alone - is an ongoing series of efforts to solve problems. By 'problems' we do not only mean the worries and dilemmas that bring people to the psychiatrist and the psychological clinic. Whether or not to accept a proffered drink, which of two ties to buy, what to do about the unexpected guest or the 'F' in algebra are problems too. They all involve, until they are resolved, a certain tension, a disequilibrium, a challenge. We hover between doing and not doing, doing this or doing that, doing it one way or doing it another. Each choice is an act, each act is a choice. Not every act is a successful solution, for our choice may leave us with unresolved tensions or generate new and unanticipated consequences which pose new problems, but it is at least an attempt at a solution'.

(1955; 51)

These solutions are worked out in a collective group activity, but at this juncture it is important to understand the nature of 'the problem' as seen by Cohen. The problem that action is meant to solve, has two major components. The situation and the frame of reference. The situation includes the totality of the world lived in and where the person is located in that world. It includes the physical setting which must be operated in and above all the habits,

the expectations, the demands and the social organisation of the people around. Always the situation limits the things that can be done and the conditions under which they are possible. The frame of reference is that particular learnt filter of perception that each person has that excludes certain parts of the problem that another person with a different background would see. Thus we can posit the same sort of situation of a long-haired working class boy in a police station as a long-haired middle-class student in the police station. These two males have different 'problems' to cope with because they have different perceptions of their situation. The working-class boys problem may be fear of getting beaten up and the middle-class student may be afraid of getting rusticated from college. Therefore their solutions will be different.

The perception of the problems precludes the perception of solution. However, rather than create a general theory of action, Cohen was interested purely in understanding juvenile delinquency as a set of subcultural actions. Since he perceived this set of actions to be primarily those of the adolescent working-class male, it was this group that interested him in terms of their problems. Cohen sees each adolescent male as occupying a certain position in the status hierarchy. He cannot effect this position, it is something that the American social structure has created for him. "To some degree the position of the family in the social structure, particularly its status viz a viz other families determines the experiences and problems which all members of the family will encounter in the larger world". In other words, the frame of reference and the situation of a person

is to a large extent fixed by the group into which they are born. However for Cohen this was not the extent of the problems of the lower-class adolescent male. The significant problem was created by the intrusion of the wider society into the frame of reference of the boy. For in a democracy like America the idea of achieved status rather than ascribed status was also important. So it was not simply against the background of his parents' ascribed status that the boy was judged but also against the achieved status of the whole, open society. There is a uniform application of certain ideas of status across the whole society, but there is in fact not a universal ability to achieve this status throughout the social system.

In fact, and crucially, the lower-class adolescent male has a much lesser chance of achieving the status of a successful person. Importantly Cohen stresses that the lower-class boy subscribes himself to this societal set of status and so cannot achieve high status in his own eyes for though we refer to them as "middle-class" norms, they are really manifestations of the dominant American value system and even working-class children must come to terms with them. These norms are a typical version of the Protestant ethics, the burden of which, as in most Judao Christian sets of ethics, falls heavily upon the male, for whom upward mobility is geared to independent occupational achievement, while for the female it is geared to marriage. The ethic crystallises into nine criteria, the possession of ambition; the recognition of individual responsibility; the cultivation and possession of skills; worldly asceticism; rationality; the accentuation of manners, courtesy and personality; the control of physical and verbal aggressions; the pursuit of wholesome recreation;

and the respect for property.

This set of values is in fact alien to the familial background of the lower-class adolescent male and so they are less likely to do well in this set of criteria than the middle-class child whose parental socialisation equips them to achieve these values. If this is the case then why should the working-class child bother to try to achieve these values. For Cohen the answer lies generally in the interpenetration of the whole society by these values because "These are the norms of the people who run things in politics, business, religion and education", and in particular in the school. For it is in the school that the adolescent working-class boy comes up against the ideas of the middle-class; it is in school that these ideas are largely accepted as relevant for the boys lives themselves and it is school where they crucially discover that they will not achieve these values.

Thus we have a group of working-class males who are attempting to achieve a high status in society which is perceived as one that gives the individual an equal chance to achieve that status. Therefore any inability to attain that status is seen by the boy as his own fault. This is the crux of Cohen's problem of adjustment for the working-class boy, it is one of frustration at the inability to achieve the status that he feels he should in terms of the middle-class values.

The solution to the problem of status frustration for the boys is the crux of Cohen's theory of delinquent sub-culture formation. Put simply,

"One solution is for the individuals who share such problems to gravitate towards one another and jointly to establish new norms, new criteria of status which

define as meritorious the characteristics they do possess, the kinds of conduct of which they are capable".

(COHEN, 1955; 66)

The nature of the establishment of these new norms is a simplistic part of Cohen's theory, yet does have some relevance to a supposed human response. The boys seeing that they cannot achieve well the middle-class values simply turn the values in their head and say that they must therefore be able to do well in these values. This process is called reaction formation of values and it is by this that the values of the delinquent subculture are created. This new criteria of status has already been proved to them as a possible one for the boys to be successful in by teachers and other agents of the dominant set of values; they have been told they have no manners, are violent, have no ambition, are irrational etc. Consequently if these become the values by which status is conferred then these boys must do well.

Thus the problem of status frustration is solved by the creation of a subculture that will confer status upon these boys. Obviously the process of the creation of cultural values is a most complex one but this provides a fair overview of the way in which the subculture is created. The action flowing from that subculture is seen by Cohen as malicious, negativistic and non-utilitarian for the youths, but is seen as delinquency by the wider society. This interaction (i.e. between the delinquent subculture and the dominant society) is an important one since it reinforces the values of the delinquent subculture by constantly negatively reaffirming these values. ("You're nothing but an unambitious, irrational ill-mannered young lout"). Since these values are now positive ones the

whole process is seen as successful for the boys since they are now publicly praised (villified) and gain in status.

Yet another aspect of the interaction is worthy of comment since Cohen claims that "the delinquent subculture with its characterisation of non-utilitarianism, ~~malice~~ <sup>lice</sup> and negativism provides an alternative status system and justifies, for those who participate in it hostility and aggression against the sources of the status frustration. Thus the direction and type of action that provides a solution to the problem of status frustration is seen as itself an attack upon the cause of that problem itself.

I will make an extensive series of criticisms of Cohen's position on subcultures, but initially it is important to discuss the idea of culture itself. For many of my criticisms of Cohen come from his use of the concept of culture. He starts off his book with a relevant few words about the concept,

"The expression 'the delinquent subculture' may be new to some readers of this volume. The idea for which it stands however, is a commonplace of folk - as well as scientific thinking".

(COHEN, 1955; 11)

He then goes on to give barely a sketchy attempt at what he means by this common sense idea, yet uses it as the corner stone of his analysis, coming to be seen as the founder of subcultural theory of delinquency. This makes it very difficult to come to terms with the theoretical background to his work.

DOWNES (1965) is the first writer to try and come to terms with a definition of culture relating it to the field of subcultural theory. However, if one looks at

this section of an otherwise clear book, it becomes obvious why few writers have attempted this. This section betrays all the difficulties of searching for a definition over such a wide field.

Nevertheless it is important to come to grips with the wider implications of the concept of culture and I will attempt to do this by briefly laying out the historical basis that the idea grew up in. This will be closely linked to my discussion in the last chapter about the universalist ideas of society posed against a class analysis.

#### THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE - A WAY OF UNIVERSALISING DIFFERENCES

"The idea of culture was one of the principal intellectual outgrowths of the worldwide meeting between the expansionist West and the exotic non-Western peoples. The confrontation began with the contacts of exploration and matured into the relationships of empire. From this experience the West derived a growing need to find order in its increasing knowledge of immensely varied human life-ways. As the emerging science of anthropology developed the culture concept it thereby provided an important means to this end of discovering order in variation".

(VALENTINE, 1968; 1)

The elements to consider in the creation of the concept of culture are varied. The history of the discovery of 'different ways of life' by Western Europe is a long one and must be mentioned. The relationship between the actual discovery of a different way of life and the social relations that changed the discovery into a social and

economic relationship (colonialism, imperialism). Thirdly the prevailing ideologies of the intellectuals of the 19th century that led to the establishment of the 'social sciences' and the use of the idea of culture.

The discovery of different ways of life does not of itself create the concept of culture or that of universalism, an obvious alternative would be an appreciation of complete diversity, recognising the differences in ways of life as being substantive. Instead, theories are created that stress that these divergent morals, customs, ways of life, are a reaction to common problems of living. The end product of these theories is spelt out by Klein in the introduction to her work on English Cultures,

"The theoretical background is uncomplicated. I have taken for granted the basic postulates of comparative sociology and cultural anthropology... All social groups face some very similar problems of survival".

(KLEIN, 1965; Vol. 1 x)

These 'basic postulates' are not, of course, inevitable and if the early explorers are studied did not exist then. Instead Polo and others appreciated different ways of life as different. Yet those in Western Europe engaged in a different set of social institutions from merely 'discovering' i.e. the Church; the Merchant Adventurers; the Crown, set up, another ideology to understand these societies. The words/concepts used in this latter ideology were attacked by Montaigne in a passage of crucial significance for the rest of this section.

"I find that there is nothing barbarous or savage about that people, as far as I have been able to



learn, except that everybody will call anything barbarous that does not agree with what he is used to. Admittedly, we have no other test of truth and reason except the example and model of the notions and customs of our own country; the perfect religion; the perfect society, the perfect and complete employment of all things are naturally there".

(MONTAIGNE (1571) 1886; 125 )

Montaigne recognises the mechanics of the ideology of imperialism without linking it to the interests of those that used the ideology, and it is in this link that the important features of the ideology of culture become clear. For, as Berger has put it "ideology both justifies what is done by the group whose vested interest is served and interprets social reality in such a way that the justification is made plausible". (BERGER, P. 1966; 130). The interests and the justifications involved in this ideology were those of the church and the trader. The action that had to be justified was at the end of 500 years, no less that the complete imperialisation of the world. The process quickened perceptably in the last 100 years so that in that time span "One part of it (the world) Australia, North and South America) has been physically decimated and socially disrupted so that there are about 40,000 natives left in Australia as opposed to 250,000 at the beginning of the 19th century, most, if not all of them hungry and disease ridden.. Between 1900 and 1950 over 90 tribes have been wiped out in Brazil. During the same period 15 South American languages have ceased to be spoken" (BANAJI, 1970; 85).

The social sciences in the 19th century had to start with their base the ideology of colonialism and the

perception of different ways of life as pathological, since this was the almost universal way of viewing different ways of life. There was a necessity to create a reasoned order out of this diversity reflecting, as Montaigne put it, the perfect society at home. Thus the concept of culture provided the sufficient idea of diversity of ways of life within a universalist framework of common problems of living which were met with different cultural patterns in different societies. If this unifying concept was not created then there could be no ideological guide lines justifying the exploitation and interference of Western societies in these different ways of life. For if they were JUST different it lets open the possibility that they are really just as good as the metropolitan culture. However, once the concept of culture was linked with that of evolutionary progress the justification for imperialism was complete. Therefore, for example, whilst the French had as their practice of imperialism the actual inclusion of other cultures and societies in their own, based upon the precept that all men are equal, the unifying concepts of culture and progress explained the tremendous power imbalance of the two nations. It was inevitable that the ideology of imperialism should recognise this power imbalance as a part of 'order in variation' and use a concept-like culture rather than one totally resting in diversity. As Malinowski said "the concept of culture arose inevitably as a heuristic device, or a way of looking at facts" (MALINOWSKI, 1933; 15) (my emphasis) and it is important to understand why this heuristic device inevitably arose rather than some other.

In the 19th century the idea of social progress was important for social scientists researching into the western societies as well as the Afro-Asian ones. The

working-class could be viewed as backward and needing advancement to gain the refinement of the middle-class yet the rise of the concept of culture as applied to the western societies' different ways of life only really occurred since World War II. This period has seen a confrontation as varied and as important as the confrontation between Western Europe and the 'primitive' ways of life. The emergence into the light<sub>2</sub> of several important groups WITHIN societies, all of which have existed previously in darkness has seen the re-emergence of the term culture. The visibility of poor, youth, deviants, blacks and the working-class have posed the same conceptual problems as the Zulu and ~~xiwi~~ These groups obviously live different styles of life from the average 'normal' bourgeoisie yet these ways of life and differences need to be understood as part of a universal system of values, attitudes etc. The term sub-culture has come to signify a recognition of their diversity without giving them the recognition of structural and substantive differences. This is compounded by a failure to define the term sub-culture except by means of an analogy which is in itself instructive.

"Speaking broadly, subcultures within a culture may be compared with dialects of a language. Regional class and generalised subsocieties are often distinguished by linguistic variations, sometimes regarded as dialects which are part of their sub-cultures. The differences between subcultures within a larger way of life may be similar to the contrasts of idioms, the limited differences of vocabulary, or accent found to differentiate dialects make them recognisable as belonging to the same language. Similarly, subcultures presumably share some theories,

patterns and configurations marking them as parts of a culture".

(VALENTINE, C. 1968; 106)

However, any of the recent studies in sociolinguistics (HYMES; 1971) and LABOV; 196<sup>6</sup>) have shown the weakness of attempting to show the basic universality of language. The dialect is not simply a branch of a language in the way in which legs are part of a table since in terms of the individuals speaking it, interpreting it, creating it,<sup>3</sup> it means something totally different to them than another dialect. Thus to say that a dialect is part of the same language is a heuristic device, a way of organising the facts that is not necessarily true to the experience of the world. It shows once more the attempts towards a universalisation of differences that characterised the rise of the idea of culture in the 19th century and the rise of subculture since the second world war. Both of these concepts have arisen as ideologies in response to the recognition of diversity in ways of life.

2 This term is taken from Brecht's "Threepenny Opera" to describe the process whereby a group become visible in society".

"Those who walk in darkness see only those in the light and they see the light.

Those who walk in the light see only themselves and they see the light".

3 An analogy from Hymes

PATHOLOGY AND DIVERSITY<sup>4</sup>

Having outlined the background to the concept of culture I am now in a position to cover what I take to be the major tension within the concept in all the cases where it is used by studies discussed in this chapter. Since it is used to understand diversity within a universal framework of 'human' problems there will be obvious tensions between the thrust of differentiation and that of similarity. This tension runs through the criticism in this chapter but is not seen as important as that between two methods of differentiation that are behind that tension. On the one hand ways of life are appreciated for themselves; on the other hand words and concepts are used within cultural studies that betray attempts to compare that culture with another. These I will style the tension between pure diversity and pathology.

Most obviously this 'comparison with another culture' is almost always with that culture of the writer (as Montaigne noted) and this culture is always the writers cited in this chapter that of bourgeois Great Britain or bourgeois U.S.A. These ideas of pathology are expressed in terms of a lack of something in the culture under study, or in terms of an interpretation of a piece of action based not on a respect for differences, but on the cultural background of the writer. In anthropology it is only recently that the sub-discipline has rid itself of almost complete pathological endeavour (~~LEACH;~~) In sociology the problem has been more complex.

4 The conceptual backing for this section owes much to MATZA (1970).

Within the sociology of deviance the tensions between pathology and diversity with regards to studies of culture came into the fore with the Chicago School. Their analysis and methodology, similar as it was to anthropology, led to this tension. For example in Faris book on the Chicago School written as it is by a committed member of the school one can see this tension in the section on the gang. In the five pages on the studies of the gang by Thrasher, Shaw and Mckay there are several sentences that stress the idea that delinquency, whilst being a different form of behaviour, is not pathological. ("The motivation in each boy for beginning and continuing delinquent behaviour was found to be normal"). However, in talking about the neighbourhood where the delinquency occurs it is characterised by disorganisation (... the burden of a massive amount of research evidence pointed towards general neighbourhood disorganisation among the basic causes of delinquent behaviour). Thus rather than characterise the life of the interstitial areas of the city as that of a different form of organisation it was seen as in some way pathological when compared to the major ideas of organisation in the city. (FARIS 1967; 72-77)

In using the concept of culture, and in studying ideas and actions that are manifestly different the sociology of deviance obviously comes up against the difficulties of pathology and diversity more often than most sub-disciplines studying human action. The impetus behind the new deviancy theory has been an attempt to  
5  
purge the sub-discipline of its pathological connotations.

Their success has been limited, but they have succeeded in portraying the cultures that they talk about with much more respect than the studies of working-class culture which I will mention later in this chapter. Indeed much of the discussion about the studies of working-class culture will be about the ways in which they discuss these cultures as pathological.

### CRITICISMS OF COHEN

This background to the ideas of culture, leading to the tension within the concept between pathology and diversity leads subcultural theorists to a number of difficulties within their analysis. I would now like to turn to these difficulties with specific reference to Cohen's work.

It seems vital for Cohen's whole work that the working-class boy must internalise the middle-class values as a guide for action. Yet the nature of that process, the extent of it and the effect this has on action is never really spelt out or analysed. The whole complex set of processes is used in different ways in different sections of his work, as indeed is the aetiology of these norms (discussed below). The process of the effect of these norms upon working-class boys can be said to be along the following continuum,

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| A. Impossible to be indifferent to middle-class norms | Increasing<br>strength of<br>effort of<br>middle-class<br>norms. |
| B. Middle-class norms infringe on action              |  |
| C. Influenced by middle-class norms                   |  |
| D. Internalise middle-class norms                     |  |

In different areas of the thesis the effect of middle-class norms on working-class is discussed by Cohen as being at different planes on this continuum. However, I would argue that for his theoretical structure of reaction formation there needs to be a fairly heavy commitment to the values of the middle-class otherwise the frustration of their non-attainment would not be so great as to lead to a formation of values around the opposite values. Thus, implicitly if there was never a commitment to middle-class values there would be no commitment to the opposites of these values. If for instance the boy simply couldn't be indifferent to these norms simply because of the power of those that control society why should they try and follow their direction and feel frustrated at their non-achievement. It is only if we posit the fourth idea of internalisation that the full theory of frustration can follow on from there.

However, this represents only half of the process, the full relationship between values and actions is never spelt out. It is assumed that if 'norms' are 'held' then individuals will act in accordance with them. As I outlined in ~~Chapter~~ 1, given the sociological technique of finding out about the holding of 'norms' this is fraught with danger, since it can be shown that on many occasions people act in contradiction of the norms that they 'hold'. Thus while it may be true that most boys will agree to the statement that 'to steal is wrong' the extent to which they 'hold' this as a 'norm' and act in accordance with it may be very little. It is the confusion over this methodological and theoretical point that lays Cohen open to the attacks by Matza (1964). For if he agrees that people act on the norms they hold and also agrees that norms people



hold can be discovered by simply a checklist of statements then it is impossible for him to set such a firm line around his subculture. However, if he rejects this simplistic analytical chain then the process that his theory in itself is based on becomes suspect.

The extent of internalisation of middle-class norms and the method of internalisation is something that Cohen is very unclear on. In a passage already quoted he says that the working-class child must come to terms with them as middle-class values. On other occasions he calls them American values (rather than middle-class) and yet/<sup>on</sup>others he refers to them as dominant values. The nature of the dominance is never really clear. Is it because they are held by a majority? Is it because they are national? Is it because they are held by only a small collection of people (called middle-class) but that these people have power? All of these it seems are true. Yet the precise nature of the birthplace of these values is vital to the whole process. For if we suppose it is the essence of Americanism that commands their universality then this has a very different effect than if they are values of a powerful minority, with different institutions used to propagate these values. If there are different institutions then the degree and nature of internalisation is different.

In its weakest sense Cohen claims "Whether these norms are applied by working-class children or not these children cannot be indifferent to them. They are the norms of people who run things in politics, business, religion and education". Immediately it must be said that if working-class children do NOT apply these norms then how can they become frustrated at their non-achievement. Yet despite this theoretical

muddle about the nature of the people who originally hold these norms and the apparent vacillation on the vital theoretical point on the internalisation of them, Cohen points out a vital point about interaction in society, that informs my whole approach to the research. It is not possible for the children to be indifferent to middle-class values NOT because they are inherently natural or dominant but because they are the values of those people that run things. This has some very important implications about the nature of interaction between groups in society. It does not posit the simple interaction between different groups with different values, but rather says that certain sets of values are held by groups who have power to enforce these values, or at least to try and enforce them. This account of interaction between different value positions is one that is continually returned to in the thesis. In terms of education, the education system is seen as an attempt to impose its values upon the boys, in terms of law and policing; the police attempt to enforce certain ideas of ~~leisure~~ leisure patterns on boys. The boys cannot ignore these values in living their lives but this reflects not so much the values themselves as the power of the people who hold them. The problems in the lives of the boys are the institution attempting to enforce the values not the problems arising from failure to attain certain valued ends.

However, for Cohen, if we continue with his argument it is status frustration at non-achievement of these values that produces the problems that create the subculture. But the precise nature of this as an experientially felt problem by the boys is left very imprecise. Since it is this that is at the crux of the nature of the subcultural transformation this lack of clarity in terms of the boys themselves makes it difficult to decide how best to use

aspects of Cohen's ideas. There are several possible interpretations from Cohen's work. Firstly that there is a human need for status in the eyes of peers and significant others and that the lack of achievement of this status is itself the problem. Secondly, it is possible that the problem is one of destroyed self-respect that results from the lack of status, for there are many times when Cohen uses self-respect as the focus of the problem. Thirdly he talks about the problem as one of frustration at the structures and institutions blocking the attainment of status. Now all three of these form completely different experiential problems for working-class boys. It is different for a boy to feel he has no status because he doesn't meet the standards of a series of norms that he has internalised or to feel that he cannot respect himself because he is a failure. These problems could lead to significantly different solutions in terms of action. From this it is possible to learn that if we use Cohen's way of understanding subcultural formation we must formulate exact experientially located 'problems' to use in the analysis rather than try to create sociological categories which in the end would lead to entirely different sets of actions.

Cohen never fully discusses the different sorts of subcultures and cultures that effect his boys. It would appear that America consists of the dominant set of values and the subcultures that form in response to this set of values. Consequently, whilst the dominant set of values is called middle-class, the lower-class are assumed not to have a significantly different set of cultural values as a group. This is only hinted at and never thought to be sufficiently important to pay any real attention. So the

boys don't confront the middle-class institutions with anything like a different culture, or if they do this is not sufficiently important for Cohen to formulate. This provides us with a very peculiar picture of the boys background since it is NOT suitably middle-class but is in some way of no consequence in the formulation of the delinquent subculture. This is a flaw that I will attempt to rectify in a discussion of Miller and a discussion later on of working-class culture.

The last criticism of Cohen is of the way in which he copes with the divergence-pathology difficulty of using culture. For the most part he discusses the delinquent subculture in non-normative language and analyses the values and action as diversity rather than pathology. However, in his use of the words, non-utilitarian, malicious and negativistic he betrays a use of phraseology of pathology. It may not appear utilitarian to the observer, yet the action of the youth is utilitarian to himself and to his own culture and to style it as negativistic is to fail to understand and respect the culture in its own right i.e. as a response to a situation. The subculture is at times viewed as good or bad with regard to the dominant culture. This is to be expected considering the time when Cohen was writing and the links between the social sciences and social policy about stopping delinquency. What is important is to notice how those who have followed Cohen's paradigm have equally fallen into this normative trap.

6

From Cohen then it is possible to unravel several important difficulties. Apart from a general lack of clarity about the meaning of culture, subculture, I would suggest there are four major theoretical mistakes:

- (1) A lack of clarity about the way in which working-class boys internalise middle-class norms and use them as guides for action
- (2) The lack of clarity with the nature of the problem that is experientially felt by the boys. Unless this is clear it is not possible to talk about the link between the solution of 'delinquent' action to problems
- (3) There is no discussion of any working-class culture providing the boys with a cultural background that limits and informs their actions when they come into contact with the middle-class institution
- (4) That Cohen, at times, talks in pathological language about the delinquent subculture

As has been said above, rather than attempt to provide a critique of all the literature in subcultural theory, I will discuss only those areas of direct relevance for my theoretical ideas on culture. In other sections the relevant areas of this tradition are discussed. As mentioned above the criticism of Cohen by Matza are important and will be discussed in Chapter 4; similarly Cloward and Ohlin feature in Chapter 5. There is, however, one major part of subcultural theory that needs to be discussed in this section, that linked with Miller.

Whilst Cohen failed to come to terms with the existence of the working-class culture in the creation of a delinquent subculture Miller (1958) following on from the Chicago school tried to direct the emphasis onto the working class culture.

"In the case of gang delinquency the cultural system which exerts the most direct influence upon behaviour is that of the lower-class community itself - a long established, distinctively patterned tradition with

an integrity of its own - rather than a so-called delinquent subculture".

(MILLER, 1958; 6 )

Miller saw that there was a group whose way of life, values, and patterns of behaviour were the product of a distinctive cultural system which he termed lower-class. He saw this way of life as having a number of focal concerns, ("areas or issues which command respect and persistent attention and a high degree of emotional involvement"). These focal concerns were seen as distinctive patterns that significantly differed both in order and weighting than that of middle-class culture. Miller specifically talked about focal concern rather than value so that he could overcome the inferred pathology of the word 'value'.(MILLER, 1958; 8)

These focal concerns are characterised in a different way from the problem solving values of Cohen. They are part of a culture that the boy learns from his background all the time. They evolve that way because of the pressures of family life brought about by a weak or transient father whose position of authority in the family is severely weakened by his inability to contribute financially to the family. Thus the economic insecurities of lower-class life had an effect upon the dominance of the father in the household allowing mother to characterise the culture by the concept mother-centred.

These focal concerns were trouble; toughness; smartness; excitement; fate; and autonomy. Miller says that the lower-class adolescent tries to direct his action by means of the focal concern. This action is then said to be law violating by the wider society and the lower-class adolescent only learns through experience to temper this action by the

knowledge of its clashes with middle-class society. As Miller says,

"In areas where these (focal concerns) differ from features of middle-class culture, action oriented to the achievement and maintenance of the lower-class system may violate norms of middle-class culture and be perceived as deliberately non-conforming or malicious by an observer strongly catnected to middle-class norms. This does not mean, however, that violation of the middle-class norm is the dominant component of motivation, it is a by product of action primarily oriented to the lower-class system. The standards of lower-class culture cannot merely be seen as a reverse function of middle-class culture - as middle-class standards 'turned upside down'; lower-class culture is a distinctive tradition many centuries old with an integrity of its own".

(MILLER, 1958; 19)

Thus the commission of delinquent acts is seen as the product of conforming to an established culture which then just so happens to be contravention to middle-class culture.

Miller makes two fatal theoretical errors that are closely inter-related. Firstly, since he is at pains to stress the traditional centuries long aspects of lower-class culture, he fail~~s~~ to see its dynamism and the way it has been created. Secondly, he fails to see that one of the factors that created it was the conflict with the middle-class culture. His analysis of cultural conflict is at best weak and fails to have any appreciation of the nature of power in the wider society. Both of these failures are connected with Miller's failure to analyse the concept of culture that he so readily uses. At no

stage does he try and locate culture in the wider society. Thus the ideas of creation and change cannot be tackled since it raises questions outside of his theory, located in a wider theory of society. If he were to see culture as a human product rather than see it as, at times, an almost natural creation as if it is just the way in which working-class people live, rather than being created by the nature of their 'working-class-ness'.

It is interesting to contrast Miller with Cohen since the latter's theory meets most of the criticisms that I have of Miller. For Cohen's culture was an ongoing dynamic process that groups of people created to deal with collective problems, for individual problems that were similar. This idea of a process can be contrasted with Miller's emphasis upon the traditional aspect of working-class culture without ever saying when, where or how the tradition had started. It is inconceivable that there is much consistency of the focal concerns of the American working-class over 'centuries'. Indeed stretching back only 100 years one would have found a very different set of experiential day-to-day problems for the working-class of America. Thus to posit as Miller does the smooth application of focal concerns evolved in the 19th century to the problems of the 1970s. The relationship between the past culture and the present is much more subtle than either the seeming constant dynamism over time of Cohen or the seeming stasis of Miller. For whilst it is true that the situational problems of say the working-class youth in 1972 cannot be answered by the cultural solutions his grandfather used 60 years ago the frame of reference that provides the set of choices is very bound over time. Thus the methods of thinking about solutions to the



problems of having to do homework are supplied mainly by the 'traditional working-class culture', whilst the actual solutions are worked out on a dynamic basis. The relationship then between history and present is one where the person's cultural received-history is based upon the collective solution of his background yet in no way determines his day-to-day solution, rather it provides certain limitations that cannot arise as solutions. For example in meeting the problem of having to do homework the working-class boy cannot simply choose any solution, for example "buckling down and doing his work every night", since the boy's background restrains this choice. He does not however use his parents and grandparents' solution since the problem is now presented to him in a different way; instead his age and class group evolve their own solutions.

Over time working-class culture has evolved a number of cultural solutions to the major problem it faces but it has never stopped evolving, for it has never found the perfect solution.<sup>7</sup> Thus it continues to be dynamic. It has also had different stress for different of its members. Thus, the wives of working-class families are a lot less concerned with the actual practice of blacking, going slow and striking, than their husbands have evolved. Similarly with the adolescent youths. Different people face different sorts of problems and evolve their own solution, yet they remain distinctively working-class. Thus the working-class wife supports her husband's cultural action of striking by her own actions in the areas of economy in shopping etc. - slightly different solutions to slightly different problems.

One of the major ways in which cultures evolve is in

their relationship with the power. Miller appears to exclude this completely and misses the point made by Cohen about the middle-class culture being held by people that run things. In this way it is possible to see that large parts of working-class culture could only be understood as having been developed as solutions to the problem of living in a society dominated by institutions created by a class whose values and ideas differed greatly from theirs.

7 From a railway worker in 1938, "Meanwhile here I am working on the railway, lucky as things go. Out of my average earnings of nearly £4 a week I am able to get a council house for 13s 6d per week; I have a radiogram and a fair number of records ... At the weekend I generally go drinking with my pals and talking over the stuff we read. I do my little bit for the working men's cause when I can. Not a bad life you'll say. No, not as bad as many, but there's this about it, it doesn't get us anywhere. From the point of view of the world in general, we're just hired help and the dummer the better. They want our labour, not our brains or imagination. If we try to use either there's an outcry that we are red desperadoes intent on smashing civilisation. Yet civilisation is smashing all right; the guys who have appointed themselves to run it don't seem to have the capacity. Perhaps it has become too big a job for the members of one class".

(T.A. McCULLOCH, "ON THE RAILWAY IN SEVEN SHIFTS; in J. COMMONS 1938).

Thus it is not simply Cohen's delinquent subculture that developed in opposition to middle-class culture, but the whole culture of the working-class. It did not develop solely as a result of this interaction but much of it has been greatly influenced by it, and, most obviously those parts that most come into contact with these institutions are most effected by them. Thus it is that in school, an institution that I will posit was created by government in order to implement a set of cultural values of the middle-class, and it is this group whose values have been especially affected by this conflict. What is important to remember though is that these areas of working-class culture are effected not by middle-class values but by the problems created by those institutions created for the propagation of middle-class values.

So far I have dealt purely with those theories that informed my research in terms of the general approach to the subject. There has been no attempt to discuss the way this links with the wider areas of the substance of working-class culture studies in Great Britain as I wanted to fully develop the theories worked out by Cohen and Miller that I found useful in approaching the research. Obviously the criticisms of Cohen and the theoretical lead of Miller meant that it was important for me to understand the nature of the substance of working class culture that provided the boys background. It will be seen in the chronology that I spent some time reading this material in an attempt to gain these substantive insights. It is important though that I read these studies NOT to gain any conceptual or theoretical insights <sup>as such,</sup> but to understand what the nature of working-class culture was.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF WORKING-CLASS CULTURE - AN EXAMPLE OF  
PATHOLOGICAL SOCIOLOGY

From the importance given to class in ~~Section~~ <sup>Chapter</sup> 1 and above it is obvious that I would try and understand this culture as one of the major corner stones of the research. However, given the limited nature of the empirical research that I had time for it was not possible for me to study the cultural background of the boys in Sunderland. Unfortunately, this still left me with a need to understand working-class culture, since I had realised the theoretical necessity of it, so I had to depend upon the substantive discussions that the sociology of working-class culture had produced. Given my criticisms of the concept of culture, this obviously led to difficulties since much of the substantive empirical work was very closely bound up with the theoretical problems contained in the pathology/diversity tension outlined above. Studies of working-class culture in Great Britain obviously were studies of a different way of life from the viewpoint of academics and in most cases bourgeois academics who failed to respect this culture for itself. As a consequence much of the language used to describe the material is outrageously pathological, even more so than the Chicago school mentioned above. For the American tradition of studying working-class culture, though justly criticised by Valentine (1968) as being biased in judging it in middle-class terms is much better than its British counterpart. However, this is not a review of studies of

8

indigenous working-class culture, rather it is a report of my attempts to discover the salient factors (for my ~~research~~) of British working-class culture by reading British sociology.

At the start of this thesis there are two quotes, widely differing in nature and intent, but both of continuing importance in my research. The methodological quote from Barthes (1954) is concerned with the analytical tension between entering a phenomenon to explain it and thereby exploding its meaning, and writing the phenomenon down extant and thereby keeping it within its own mystification. In understanding working-class ways of life in this country these two difficulties have been constantly encountered. The studies of working-class culture by Klein (1965), Mays (1954; 1959; 1962; 1963b), Dennis (1957) will all be criticised for destroying the meaning of the culture by too readily describing it in terms of bourgeois culture. The studies of communities Young and Willmott (1957) and other studies cited in Frankenberg (1966) will be criticised for maintaining through the idea of community, a mystification which does not fully come to grips with the interactive nature of working-class culture with other cultures. For certain ideas such as community and neighbourhood are not fully explored as social groupings resulting from this interaction. One or two sociological studies notably Hoggart (1958 ) and Jackson (1969) manage to overcome this particular difficulty.

8 The Chicago style studies by Lewis (1959; 1961; 1966) have justly received criticism (COATES AND SILBURN, 1970) for its analysis of the culture of poverty, but Lewis attempts to maintain the integrity of the way of life he is studying. Similarly SUTTLES (1969) study of slum life puts some emphasis upon the organisation of the slum even if this is occasionally contradicted.

The second quote in the preface is by a working-class novelist (Jack Common) who was writing there about his own experience of the interaction between his cultural background and that of the middle-class in the institution of the school. It is specifically the attitude of working-class culture to the bourgeoisie of this country that is important to this thesis. For if the theoretical ideas gained from Cohen and Miller are to be helpful they must be given the substance of this working-class cultural attitude. Thus in the school I posited that the working-class frame of reference would largely dictate the way in which the choice of solution to the problem was chosen, and that certain choices were not possible. Therefore if the sociology of working-class cultures were to say that the working-class uniformly had attitude characterised by deference towards the bourgeoisie we would expect the range of solutions to the experiential problems posed by the middle-class to be found within that frame of reference.

The cultural reactions to the middle-class by the working-class in this country are fairly universally agreed by the sociologists who studied working-class culture. However, their language differs.

"Even the most sympathetic writers on working-class ways of life remark on what appears as a stubborn determination not to develop - and not to allow others to develop - attitudes or behaviour that would make for a richer and more interior life".

(KLEIN, 1965; 87)

In the language of diversity, stripped of its class bias Klein is commenting upon a mistrust by the working-class of those dedicated group of people that Klein sees

as out to assist them. These ~~same~~ individuals who in other places in Klein's book one realises are teachers and social workers, are described in very different terms by Hoggart.

"They are the people at the top, the higher-ups, the people who give you the dole, call you up, tell you to go to war, fine you, made you split the family in the thirties, get yer in the end, are'nt to be trusted, are all twisters really, clap yer in clink and treat yer like muck".

(HOGGART, 1958; 73)

Hoggart describes the use of the concepts in working-class culture of us and them to dichotomise the social world. In other studies of home and neighbourhood (YOUNG and WILLMOTT, 1957) the writers have stressed the importance of these two ideas without really ever discussing the way in which these two ideas arose. Hoggart however analyses these two institutions.

"I have emphasised the strength of home and neighbourhood and have suggested that this strength arises partly from a feeling that the world outside is strange and often unhelpful, that it has most of the counters stacked upon its side and that to meet it on its own terms is difficult".

(HOGGART, 1958; 72)

Thus the experiences of home and neighbourhood used so often to characterise working-class culture are themselves part of the general mistrust of middle-class society. The same can be said for community.

"(If we) look at the community from the outside we can see that there goes with it a suspicion of the new and strange which can be strong but can also be

disabling. It is sceptical of the police ... It is sceptical about politicians ... It is baffled by officials. It is ambivalent about immigrants. And even more so about the educated. Community ends very sharply ... by itself it has an important consolatory value in an unequal society, but it has little more".

(JACKSON, 1969; 159-160)

Similarly Dennis (1957) after an extended discussion of working-class leisure activities comments upon the Ashton miners mistrust of new environments,

"In this way he is able to withstand the influences of a new environment by electing only those aspects of it which fit in with his established pattern of existence". (DENNIS, 1957; )

Thus expressed in different terms we have a picture of a culture that feels itself under some form of attack and erects institutional and ideological defences against the middle-class world outside. I stress the fact that it feels itself because in this section this is sufficient legitimacy which provide us with the right to take this feeling and its institutional and cultural reactions seriously. In the next section I will show how historically this general feeling can be shown to have a great deal of evidence; and specifically in the field of education has a great deal of weight. In other words not only do they feel under attack but the bourgeoisie is in fact attacking them.

This feeling of attack provides the working-class boy's frame of reference for the general interaction between the working-class and the bourgeoisie. This perception has been studied in more specific detail by some social scientists.



Jackson discusses the different perceptions of the police in different class culture.

"When a policeman appears on the steps of the Reform Club it is hardly of any consequence to its members; when one appears outside a Huddersfield working men's club the air is tense with protective hostility.

The middle-class expects help from a policeman; the working-class expects trouble".

(JACKSON, 1969; 116)

It is possible to portray this mistrust by the working-class man as one that results from a fear of anything outside of his club or culture, or it is possible to see it as a response to a problem created by the police as an institution and the way that it interacts with the working-class. Given the nature of law and the nature of the police, this mistrust represents a solution to the problem of a police force attempting to modify their behaviour. Both Jackson and Hoggart refer to the perception of the working-class of the law relating to betting before the significant change in the early 1960s. Then, plain clothes policemen would be seen waiting for some time in pubs to catch a four pennies being bet in a game of dominoes, while anyone with an account of a Commission Agent was free to bet. Similarly the law on drunk and disorderly and general patterns of drinking is seen as aimed at working-class cultural patterns. These perceptions of law provide a very good reason for the closed community and mistrust as this itself represents one of the major solutions to the problems of powerlessness in the face of the law or the police.

Obviously in the specific field of education this mistrust is very vital to my research since it will form

the background to the boys expectations of school. MAYS and ) has commented extensively on this,

"there runs beneath it the belief that school is not really very important, that education is something imposed on them from above, with which they are forced to comply to some extent, however alien and almost unnecessary it may appear".

(MAYS, 1962; )

Again for the moment it will be sufficient to say that if this is the way that they define reality then that is reality but given the fact that society is viewed as split between us and them. If we don't run an institution then they do. In the next section I will argue that this cultural set of values and actions reflects the experiences of the working-class since its formation. Indeed as a class it was totally created by forces outside of its control when an urban industrial labour force was created. Since then any attempt to enter into the middle-class society on its own cultural terms whether it be as simple as Ashtom miners going into the Athenaeum in London or as complex as the whole pattern of industrial relations, they have learnt the difficulties of trusting anyone but "yer own sort" (HOGGART, 1958; 76). In fact it is the people outside your own sort that is the cause of its problems so why should we trust them.

Given then that there is a mistrust of the institutions of society that interfere with their lives, why then do the working-class interact with them at all? The simple answer which provides one of the major keys to the structure of experience of a 15 year old boy in Sunderland is that they HAVE to. If we could hypothesise a world where they would be left alone by the institutions of school and the police,

they would not be bothered by the institutions around them, however vitally those institutions are interested in them. It is from this side that the impetus behind the interaction occurs NOT from inside working-class culture, for as has been seen in one way or another, all ~~writers~~ agree that this culture is closed, cut off, mistrustful etc., therefore any interaction between that and middle-class culture is enforced. Thus the examples given by Hoggart about "Them" ALL include a degree of compulsion that is vital to the existence of interaction. Then, the problem is that of the compulsion. Thus if we view working-class culture from the inside, we see that its mistrust is reinforced by the constant intrusions from middle-class culture that create institutions that make demands upon it.

#### 'BRITISH WORKING CLASS CULTURE' AND 'SUBCULTURAL THEORY' THE CONSTRUCTION OF SUBSTANTIVE CONCEPTS TO UNDERSTAND CULTURAL ACTION.

In conclusion this section has continually talked of the importance of these ideas for my research and I would like to conclude it with six points that I have drawn out of my reading and work in this area. These are as much the result of my empirical research as a theory that preceded it. It is therefore bogus to see them as a set of hypotheses that are to be methodologically tested and verified or disproved in the next 60,000 words, for that is not the nature of this research act.

Firstly, individuals face problems created by the structure of society, and it is important to exactly locate these problems in time and space. It is vital to treat these problems as real and experienced and to begin an

analysis with that formulation of the problem, rather than with the cultural reaction to the problem. If these two are confused then it is possible to get some rather confused analysis of which the following is a prime example.

"When living so near the unalterable unpleasant realities of life, it is very hard to believe that 'talking will do any good' for the very good reason that it really will not".

(KLEIN, 1965; 94)

In this sort of theoretical approach to studying ways of life it misses the direct link that every cultural solution has to a structural problem. Unless the former is seen as in relationship with the latter it merely seems that for some reason the working-class are against talking. The perception of this relationship can only be seen by a respect for the languages and way of life of the people being studied. Thus Cohen misunderstand the problem of the working-class boy as frustration at not attaining middle-class values, yet fails to verify this as a problem for the boys in any 'experienced' sense. Methodologically and epistemologically our own problems must not be seen to be the problems of those we are studying.

Secondly that solutions to these problems are created by groups of people using the existing 'artefacts, goods, technical processes, ideas, habits and values' (MALINOWSKI), and that these solutions are related to the problems even if they appear to the observer not to be. Since it is the person experiencing them that knows the problem and solution better than the researcher. It may be that the researcher can see a much better solution to the problem, but this is using his own culture and background. Thus if a middle-class child is afraid of a

teacher he may tell his parents as a solution, whilst a working-class child may shut out as much of the experience of the lesson as he can, thereby apparently causing more trouble by "not paying attention", but this does not nullify this as a solution to the problem. That solutions to problems are to a large extent shared (in fact tend to be shared as much as the problem) and are tried and tested over time. Thus we have a definition of the culture process as the trying and testing of solutions to structural problems and the extent of a culture is as large as the extent of the problems.

Thirdly, there are no universal experientially felt problems and therefore there are no universal cultural solutions. It is not true, except in a purely intellectual moral sense that "all social groups face some very similar problems of survival"<sup>5</sup>. In experiential terms the Americans in New York and the Vietnamese in Hanoi face very different problems of survival. Similarly with all universals, they are universals in intellectual terms only. This is not to overrule the second point that problems and solutions are felt and discovered collectively, but it is a warning in trying to apply universals affecting all. Empirically I will return again and again to the attack upon the belief that just because we called a thing society all the people face similar problems and have similar solutions.

Because, fourthly, there are great differentials in terms of power, control, income and life style in our society. That these differentials both provide massively different sorts of problems for different groups of people and also make massively different sorts of solutions possible. In fact as has been suggested already in this

chapter one of the major sets of problems for the different cultures that result from these differentials is in fact the relationship between these different cultures. Thus there are specific cultural solutions to the problems created by the interaction between cultures.

Fifthly, that the nature of the interaction between middle and working-class values in this society has been one where the impetus has come from the middle-class culture. That this culture commands more power in society, as it is at present constituted, and that institutions are created to impose this culture upon the working-class. That this interaction then becomes a specific problem for the working-class culture to solve, since it is one enforced by many different sorts of power and is persistent and cannot be ignored. The specific problems and solutions that the two classes of people feel provide much of the next chapter.

Sixthly, that both the cultural solutions to problems and the problems themselves can change the process of problems. Since both the problems and the solutions are liable to change it is not possible to posit a static process or to view something like working-class culture as having not moved or changed at all. Thus it is dangerous to overstress the traditional nature of the culture for whilst it is true that the solutions of the past provide the cultural present with which problems are confronted, these solutions will not meet the problems of the present exactly since they have changed. Therefore the problem of lack of money for old working-class people may well be tackled using the accrued solutions of a lifetime of counting the pennies with its resulting cultural solution. But these problems are different since in many

cases the Old Age Pensioner has more real income than at any time in their life though they are confronted by poverty as a problem. Similarly within a culture a problem may change significantly over time and the old cultural solutions are no longer precisely applicable, as with the problems of working-class adolescence.

The remainder of the thesis is arranged around three experiential problem areas for the boys. These areas were dictated in part by my own interest in the school and partly by the disciplinic ideas about delinquency. Thus Chapter 3 is about the education problem; Chapter 4 about the spare-time problem and Chapter 5 about the job problem.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### Education as Guerilla Warfare; How the bourgeois failed to win the hearts and minds of the English working class.

Introduction	123
Sociology of Education - Limited Answers to Limited Questions	123 - 426
Class Dialectics and 'Education'	126 - 128
The Battle for the Meaning of 'Education'	128 - 192
The Nature of the Bourgeois Education meant for the Working Class	133 - 151
A) Provision of 'useful' bourgeois facts and theories	
B) Bourgeois morality against working class culture - the 'failure' of the working class family	
C) The creation of a disciplined labour force	
D) The creation of a national hierarchy based upon education	
The Boys Solutions	151 - 164
Co-operation by some boys - Total agreement or Partial?	164 - 172
Teachers as 'Big-heads'	172 - 179
Classroom activity of the boys - "The guerilla amongst the people is like a fish in water"	179 - 188
Punishment and sanctions - When the campaign for the boys hearts and minds fails ...	188 - 200
Bibliography	201 - 268

## INTRODUCTION

The intellectual and personal reasons for studying the experience of school have been outlined above, what is necessary in the next page is to outline the way in which this experience of the boys in Sunderland is discussed. Following on from the previous sections much use is made of history and experience as the methodologies; class and power as the organising motives; and the boys perception of the problems as the problem.

SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION - LIMITED ANSWERS TO LIMITED QUESTIONS

As has been outlined before, the major theoretical criticism of sociological research connected with any form of social policy is the fact that it fails to define its problems within its own criteria rather than those of the wider society.<sup>1</sup> This failure is a generic one and its repercussions in the field of criminology, culture, etc. have already been brought to light by other writers.<sup>2</sup> However, within the field of education this kind of large-scale criticism has not been made until very recently,<sup>3</sup> and, whilst the general criticism has already been outlined, it is important to apply it fully to the field of education.

1 SEELEY (1966)

2 BECKER, H. (1963; 1964)

3 YOUNG, M. (1971)

The work of several authors have recently tried to de-ideologise 'education'. However, of these, ILICH (1970), HOLT, J. (1969; 1970; 1971) and to a lesser extent HENRY (1955a; 1955b; 1963; 1971) have failed to fully complete this process. Whilst they have treated the concept of 'school' as problematic, by failing to historically and sociologically locate the specific meaning of the definition of education that has come to dominate society. This is not only a result of an analysis that does not use the idea of power conflict between groups of people over definitions, rather it represents a failure to carry their problematics to its full extent.

Goodman, P. (1962; 1970; 1972) on the other hand treats the whole conception of education as problematic. Unfortunately, his analysis of the social forces that created that particular meaning is never fully worked out in these works as well as in some of his more *polemical* writings (Goodman, P. 1968).

Kozol (1969) locates his analysis specifically in black urban public schools of America. His research and analysis represents the best of these works sociologically in both theoretical and empirical terms. However, given the nature of his groups (i.e. racial and American) he could not provide a total clear comparison for me.

All these writers will be discussed ~~much more fully~~ in the last <sup>chapter</sup> ~~section~~ as they really have little substantive effect upon my actual research. Nevertheless it is important to show the difference between them and the other sociology of education work. For the great bulk of the sociology of education fails to discuss the problems it deals with in analytical rather than ideological terms. For it is this distinction that I would like to make

between the taking and making of the problems. As Young says:-

"On the whole, sociologists have 'taken' educators' problems, and, by not making their assumptions explicit, have necessarily taken them for granted. These implicit assumptions ... might be adequately characterised by an 'order' doctrine, which, as he suggests, leads to explanation in terms of a system perspective. This, starting from a loosely defined emphasis on goals or values (in this case valued about 'what a good education is') conceives of change (or innovation), in terms of a structural differentiation toward such goals, and defines 'order' problems as failures of socialisation".

(YOUNG, M. 1971; 1-2)

As a consequence the great bulk of the studies of education have been concerned with one particular framework; they have been of technical assistance to educationalists, and their problems, concepts and theories have been very close to those of the educators.

Much of the sociology of education is carried out within dominant values of the society and this leads to a series of purely technical problems being dealt with. This chapter will show that these boys experience education from outside of these values. So to understand their experience such values must be seen as problematic.

However, it is not simply the VALUES of the dominant class that must be seen as problematic but the institutions that those values inform and help to create. For bourgeois values have not only created the sociology of education, but they have also created the education system itself. Thus any raising of these values into the area of the

problematic makes the resulting analysis question not only the sociology of education, but 'education' itself.

#### CLASS DIALECTICS AND 'EDUCATION'

Within this study, the raising of these values as problematic (as stated above) has been introduced by the boys themselves. It was they that introduced me to the dialectical nature of the education experience. It was they that told me that having to go to school was their problem, and I then became interested in the background to this problem. This led me directly to a historical dialectical analysis of the problems and solutions raised by education by different classes.

Thus I have tried to continue COHEN's (1955) approach to action as problem solving and that those solutions become someone elses problems. In the following diagram each class solution becomes IN ITSELF a problem posed for the other class. The same event historically is experienced in different ways by different groups. Thus, (see over)

SOCIAL GROUP

BOURGEOISIEWORKING CLASS YOUTHPROBLEM

- (1) MAINTENANCE OF THE PRESENT  
SOCIETY

SOLUTION (one of  
many)PROBLEM

- (2) CREATION OF A SYSTEM OF  
EDUCATION TO CHANGE WORKING  
CLASS CULTURE
- HAVING TO GO TO A  
SCHOOL THAT IS TRYING  
TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMSOLUTION

- (3) LACK OF EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT, DEVIANCY AND VIOLENCE  
IN SCHOOLS
- DOLLING-OFF, PLAYING  
ABOUT, BOREDOM ETC.

SOLUTIONADDITIONAL PROBLEM

- (4) SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION  
STUDIES LEADING TO IMPROVED  
EDUCATIONAL TECHNIQUES AND  
FACILITIES
- GREATER INTERFERENCE  
IN YOUR LIFE

SOLUTION

MORE BOREDOM, SCHOOL

The processes outlined above are complex since not only are one classes' solutions a problem for the others but it is crucially the perception of the nature of that problem that leads to the solution. Thus it is possible for the bourgeoisie to feel that there is no problem about the maintenance of order and therefore there need be no solution and this particular part of the interaction would stop. So it is vital at each stage to underline the nature of the perception of the problems involved. Also I will argue that each class is a distinct social entity, it will



be noticed that the language of the solution for one is different from the language of the problem of the other, even though the actual action involved is the same, thus the language of the bourgeoisie is that of social policy - 'lack of educational achievement; creation of a national system of education' which is compulsory whilst that of the working-class boy is experiential; school is boring; I go to school because I have to'. Consequently the methodologies used to discuss these perspectives will reflect these differences.

### THE BATTLE FOR THE MEANING OF 'EDUCATION'

The ~~mean~~ing of the word education which has never become one of the 'dominant legitimising categories' (YOUNG, M. 1971; 3) in the study of social relationships was only elevated to this position by a process that took nearly a century to evolve. Crucially this evolution did not take place in an atmosphere purely of debate and discussion but within the political structure. It was the power of one group - the bourgeoisie that dominated the political and legislative arena in the second half of the 19th Century that created that definition of education.

The traditional view of the creation of a national system of education in England is one that includes a working-class pressing an unwilling middle-class into spending taxation revenues upon educating its children because it could not afford it. This picture portrays a body of Inspectors, Kay-Shuttleworth, Tremenheere, Horner and Saunders spending half a century of reporting and lobbying to persuade the laissez-faire dominated Parliament that it would be a better society if it was an educated one. The more advanced histories mention that

towards the end of the debate the clinching argument was that of economic help for the middle-class that an educated working-class would bring - (e.g. it is necessary to have a work force that can read and write to be able to compete with Germany.)

This picture leaves out any discussion of the meaning of the 'education' and it assumes that the working-class and middle-class agreed on this meaning. Instead of this I will outline the history of a struggle between alternative concepts of education - one of which was part of the working class history of the period. These alternative institutions have only recently been 'discovered'.

4

"Recent historical research points to an alternative perspective. Reflecting implicitly this national, societal and civic framework, its prime concentration is on (a) the sub-societal group, the counter-institutional formation and the counter developments of the English proletariat, and on (b) the active and innovative roles, in particular the institutional creativity, of working people". (YOUNG, 1967, '4)

The period of 40 years prior to the Education Act of 1870 saw considerable activity in education on the part of the central government particularly in the field of inspection. This inspection was used both as a direct attempt to create a 'national' system of education and to attack the concept of education evolving in these working-class institutions. Indeed the constant flow of reports to the central government was one of the major reasons for creating a climate of opinion of which it has been said "that the setting up of an education system for working classes was one of the strongest of early Victorian

obsessions" (JOHNSON, P. 1970; 1). The nature and language of this obsession must be noted ideal typically by a leader in the Times.

"The education of the people has been constantly discussed for many years but the power of the State has been paralysed because education is a subject of 'bitter dispute and fierce animosity', Church here either regarded all proposals as plans for maintenance of some exclusive ecclesiastical domination or as a wicked device for the utter destruction of all religious belief among the people generally. Meanwhile the character and conduct of the people are constantly being formed under the influence of their surroundings while we are disputing which ought to be considered the most beneficial system of education, we leave the great mass of the people to be influenced and formed by the very worst possible teachers.

Certain teachers, indeed, could be called instructors for evil. The Chartist movement might no longer be the dangerous presage of civil strife denounced by Kay-Shuttleworth in 1839 but in 1850 Harney's Red Republican had posited in full "The Communist Manifesto" supporting every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things, and calling upon working men of all countries to unite; the National Reform League was campaigning for the nationalisation of the land, atheism was being actively propogated. In the very heart of the apparently well ordered community enough evil teaching was going on to startle, if not alarm, the most firmminded.

Systems the most destructive of the peace, the happiness and the virtue of society, are boldly, perseveringly, and without let or hindrance, openly taught and recommended to the acceptance of people with great zeal, if not with great ability. Cheap publications containing the wildest and the most anarchical doctrines are scattered, broadcast over the land, in which religion and morality are perverted and scoffed at, and every rule of conduct which experience has sanctioned, and on which the very existence of society depends, openly assailed, while in their place are sought to be established doctrines as outrageous as the maddest ravings of furious insanity - as wicked as the most devilish spirit could possibly have devised. The middle classes who pass their lives in the steady and unripening duties of life may find it hard to believe in such atrocities. Unfortunately they know little of the working class, only now and then, when some startling fact is brought before us do we entertain even the suspicion that there is a society close to our own of which we are as completely ignorant as if it dwelt in another land, and spoke a different language, with which we never conversed, which in fact we never saw. Only in one way could this great danger, this great evil be counteracted. The religious sects must bury their differences. Let prudent spirit of conciliation enable the wise and the good to offer to the people a beneficial education in place of this abominable teacher".

(TIMES 2/9/1851)

The processes of visibility of the problems of the maintenance of the existing order is brilliantly outlined by the Times in the last paragraph. For the bourgeoisie it

was absurd at times of internal national peace to see the working-class as a threat to the existing society and at times of crisis their faith was in the militia or the special constables used against the Chartists. The Times quite correctly saw that any change in the legislation about education could come only from a middle-class who realised its direct link with the problems of order.

There was one group of people who from 1830-1870 were dedicated to raising the horizon of the bourgeoisie to the problem of order caused by the working-class. These individuals were also always concerned with the provision of education as the solution to that problem. This group were the Inspectorate who became dedicated to the ideology of education. These were individuals employed to go and collect information upon the working-classes and their habits. They were employed in a number of capacities; either to act as a trouble-shooter after a strike or disturbance;<sup>5</sup> or to inquire into areas that were already seen as social problems e.g. factory legislation;<sup>6</sup> or to inspect the working of legislation already existing.<sup>7</sup> All of these reports were to the central government and to a very large extent created the picture of the working classes because of the great visual barrier between them and the working class.

5 E.G. MIDLAND MINING COMMISSION FIRST REPORT SOUTH STAFFS.  
TANCRED, T. (1843)

THE STATE OF THE POPULATION OF THE MINING DISTRICTS;  
TREMENHEERE (1844)

6 E.G. First Report from Commissioners appointed to  
collect information in the manufacturing districts,  
relative to the employment of children in factories.  
(Commission of 1833)

7 Reports of the Factory Inspectors.  
Reports of the Education Inspectors.

THE NATURE OF THE BOURGEOIS EDUCATION MEANT FOR THE  
WORKING CLASS

What then was the nature of the education that these individuals put forward, and in fact was taken up completely by 1870? For as the Times said they were not in favour of learning in general, but of learning only a specific form of knowledge and in a specific way. In reading these reports over 30 years one can see that there were a number of strands of 'education' that were directly linked to certain fears of insurrection.

- (A) The provision of bourgeois facts and theories to counter 'revolutionary' and working class facts and theories
- (B) The provision of a bourgeois moral and religious code to make the working class behave according to bourgeois norms
- (C) The creation of a disciplined punctual labour force
- (D) The creation of a hierarchy of civilisation based upon education and refinement which the working class will respect and which they will be at the bottom of.

These four strands were the strands of meaning that comprised 'education' for the bourgeois Victorian and it was this meaning that was put into policy. Space in this thesis is very limited but I will outline some of these arguments. The whole argument must be viewed against a chronological time sequence that sees the working class gaining certain sorts of industrial and political power up to 1867.

(A) Provision of Useful Bourgeois Facts and Theories

The general and continuing instability of the social order was occasionally crystallised by disturbances on the part of the working population. The Miners strike of

1844 was one such struggle which was, of course, caused purely by outside agitation, so that "Proprietors", viewers and agents who had been for years conspicuous as promoters of everything that could conduce to the welfare of the working population, found themselves powerless against the misrepresentation of fact, and the erroneous arguments addressed to these men by their delegates and advisers."

<sup>NEW</sup> (TREHEERNE, 1844; 7). The resulting strike was caused by "the excitability of their peculiar tone and temper of mind, and in their liability to be led astray through their best feelings, in consequence of their present very limited state of intelligence" <sup>NEW</sup> (TREHEERNE, 1844; 13). Consequently the answer to the question of how to change this state of affairs is to be found "in more activity in building school-houses, providing trained teachers, and opening schools at which payments are so moderate as to leave no excuse to parents for neglecting to send their children".

<sup>NEW</sup> (TREHEERNE, 1844; 14)

However, on only the previous page Treheerne had outlined the fact that they were being sent to schools already; so a desire for instruction was not sufficient, it had to be the correct instruction. In other words to learn those things that were in accordance with the maintenance of the existing social order.

"The colliers appear in general to prefer sending their children to the old kind of day-schools kept by men of their own class, though the charges are generally higher than at the new schools under trained masters. I saw many of those schools of the old kind. A few of the masters appeared to be fairly qualified to teach, in their own way, all they pretended to - reading, writing and arithmetic;

but the majority of them are, as might be expected, men of very humble acquirements. The books they use are such as the parents choose to send. There can consequently be no regular course of instruction in anything. The Bible or Testament is read but very little explanation is attempted. Each child is taught whatever catechism is brought with him".

<sup>NEW</sup>  
(TREMENEER, 1844; 13)

This "education" (and the quotation marks are his own)<sup>8</sup> fails to provide the correct ideas and fails for the working man. "In all that related to a knowledge of the world around him of the workings of society, of the many social and economical problems which must force themselves daily upon the attention of every labouring man, the mind of the growing youth was left to its own direction, and therefore liable to take up its facts and principles as chance might dictate ... They are easily led into error, and persevere in it with the greater obstinacy because they want the knowledge to enable them to see where they are wrong".

<sup>NEW</sup>  
(TREMENEER, 1844; 14) The ideas that they learn about these economical problems through their 'education' were:-that "their language was that the manufacturing power of the country was in their hands". (<sup>NEW</sup>TREMENEER, 1844; 7)

8 Indeed the quality of Tremeneer's sociology cannot be disputed. His use of the concept of definitions of reality showed by his parentheses around the word strike and the word education when it is used about the working class education is throughout very precocious. Indeed in reading his work and feeling of *deja vu* comes across one since he was attempting to point out the ideological nature of education, though from a different perspective.



Thus Treheerne reported to the Government and to the coal owners that the way to stop this series of disturbances was to build schools to teach the correct facts and theories to the working man. Indeed his reports are full of kind words for these wise employers (Lord Londonderry was one) who had built schools and employed trained teachers - as this was wise economy.

As the picture of these disputes grew over the century more general statements could be made by these commentators. Continually the specific lessons were being drawn to the attention of Parliament and the bourgeoisie and by the 1860s Kay-Shuttleworth was able to adopt a scornful tone in lecturing the opponents of a national system of education.

"We think it highly probable that persons and property will, in certain parts of the country be exposed to violence as materially to affect the prosperity of our manufacture and commerce and to diminish the stability of our political and social institution. It is astonishing to us that the party calling themselves Conservatives should not lead the way in promoting the diffusion of that knowledge among the working classes which tends beyond anything else to promote the security of property and the maintenance of public order. If they are to have knowledge, surely it is part of a wise and virtuous government to do all in its power to secure them useful knowledge and to guard them against pernicious opinion".

(KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH; 1862; 231-232)

This useful knowledge did not consist purely of relative facts. The importance of teaching ideologically correct theories that would be guides for the overall

actions of the working class was also important. Again, especially later on in the century (1860) when a number of the more theoretical anti-bourgeois ideas were beginning to gain credence. Thus the Royal Commission on Trade Unions in the 1860s indicated to Kay Shuttleworth that there was a need for the teaching of bourgeois theory since he feared "the anti-social doctrines held by leaders of trade unions as to the relation of capital and labour. Parliament is again warned of how much the law needs the support of sound economic opinions and higher moral principles among certain classes of workmen and how influential a general system of public education might be in rearing a loyal, intelligent and Christian population." (KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, 1868; 194) Thus Kay-Shuttleworth returned to his earlier propogandising about the way in which the very curricula of a national education system was the bulwark against revolution. This sy<sup>9</sup>tem would teach the artisan "not only occupational skills but also the nature of his domestic and social relation, his position in society, and the moral and religious duties appropriate to it". (KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, 1832; 63) So<sup>9</sup> for Kay-Shuttleworth the actual curriculum of education could be identified as important.

Thus in the 1840-1870s the 'hidden curriculum'<sup>9</sup> of the meaning of education was spelt out. Indeed it was explicitly<sup>9</sup> to be the very definition of education. If these bourgeois facts and theories were not taught then what was going on in the 'school' was not 'education'.

9 A phrase used by Ilich (1970)

As will be discussed later the transference over time from 1870 to 1970 is a difficult process because of the de-ideologised nature of education as a concept<sup>10</sup>. So it is very rare that one gets a study of the education process as an ideological tool for distributing certain facts and theories, yet Abrams (1963) with a review of text books in British schools noted that they often tried to avoid mentioning non-benevolent occurrences such as economic slumps or industrial conflict, and where they can't avoid them they are present as 'just happening'. This would accord with Kay-Shuttleworth's idea of 'sound economic principles'. We must wait for further research on this but for the moment I would ask the reader to imagine the furore if a teacher started teaching 15 year olds about how to organise an unofficial strike!

The effect however of teaching bourgeois facts and theories to working class boys was an attempt to order their minds in a certain way. The results of this will be discussed later.

(B) BOURGEOIS MORALITY AGAINST WORKING CLASS CULTURE - THE 'FAILURE' OF THE WORKING CLASS FAMILY

The maintenance of the social order was seen to rest not only upon the education with bourgeois facts and theories. Equally concern and horror was expressed by every bourgeois when working class culture was glimpsed.

- 10 "Why no sociology of the curriculum? Perhaps the organisation of knowledge implicit in our own curriculum is so much part of our taken for granted world that we are unable to conceive of alternatives".  
(YOUNG, M. 1971; 40-41)

"On a relatively trivial level, the sports, the past-times, the language and the lack of civility of working people was severely censured. Inspectors waged war on provincial dialect and on indistinct articulation, coarse provincial accents and faults and vulgarities of expression".

(JOHNSON, 1970; 107)

This was no simple bourgeois dictate on the part of the inspectorate it represented again, a direct political link. For as the Times had said the working-class will learn by their own experience and this is a dangerous teacher. The popular culture of the class represented inevitably the day-to-day concern and experience of the working class, therefore it was not surprising that these concerns reflected the poverty and powerlessness of these people. Significantly the Inspectors saw these concerns as being potentially dangerous and condemned popular literature as "obscene, exciting and irreligious works, letters and books (that) were complaining of the badness of the times"(MINUTES; 1844; 430). The public house was universally condemned for ~~two~~ reasons, not only "the abuse of spiritous and fermented liquor" but also because public houses were recognised to be the local links of working class economic and political organisations. They were places of resort "for the pleasure of talking obscenity and scandal if not sedition amidst the fumes of gin and roar of drunken associates" (MINUTES, 1840). The links between obscenity and sedition, drink and politics cemented the condemnation of working class culture with the fear of revolutionary change. It was seen directly

that one affected the other and that the 'uplifting' or 'moralising' of the working class style of life was important in order to stabilise the political and social order.

Adolescence was continually seen as the period of greatest moral peril, for it was during adolescence that the first signs of the combination of moral decadence and political instability showed itself.

"From London and the West Riding, from Wales and East Anglia, from the countryside and from the growing cities, inspectors reported on the manifold misdoings of 'youths'. In Essex and Suffolk Cook (an inspector) diagnosed a close relationship between adolescent independence and rural incendrianism". (JOHNSON, R. 1970; 108)

Other important characteristics noted were "the early financial independence of children, their tendency to take their values from bigger, rougher and more lawless boys, coupled with the general failure of parental control, and since the children did not honour and obey their parents, they showed no proper deference to their social superiors". (MINUTES; 1844; ii; 57)

It was in the area of the failings of the working class family that a direct link was seen by 'educationalists' and 'politicians' alike (as has been argued above the differences between these two occupations can be judged to be only a greater amount of power that the latter wields in terms of initial legislation) between diagnosis of the political problem and the remedy of the educational solution. In short, it was the duty of the school teacher to act as a substitute for the failing working class parent. In the existing voluntary system of the middle of the 19th century

however,

"The influence of the teacher of a day-school over the minds and habits of the children attending to his school is too frequently counteracted by the evil example of parent and neighbours, and by the corrupting influence of companions with whom the children associate in the street and court in which they live".

(MINUTES, 1839-40)

The major aim of any national system to equip the school and the teacher with a means of combating these influences and fully carrying out his role as bourgeois parental substitute. This was based upon the continental educationalists' ideas of the teacher pupil relationship<sup>12</sup> but it is insufficient to regard this as simply the transference of educational pioneering ideals across the channel. The placing of the teacher in loco parentis was brought about by the incapacities of the working class parent to fulfil his role in any way that was acceptable to the middle class view of parental control and, as has been outlined above, this was directly linked to political stability. This can best be summed up in the words of one of the Inspectors for the Committee on the Council of Education,

12 Pestalozzi and Vehrli. Pestalozzi - Swansong p. 54.

"But laborious toil is the lot of the children of the landless agricultural labourer, and their language lessons must not set up interests which would undermine the bases of their happiness and wellbeing. Education should enable men to follow their particular calling with Godliness and honour."

"For Fletcher, the school must be an essentially foreign implantation within a commonly barbarised population. It should rest not in the satisfaction of an indigenous demand but upon aggressive movements on the part of the better elements of society. The essential character of the whole educational project is caught in Fletcher's description of the school as 'a little artificial world of virtuous exertion'.

(JOHNSON, R. 1970)

The failures of the working class family to teach working class children bourgeois morality is a continuing thesis in British education. How often indeed have Government reports said that the working class family is holding back the education attainment of the child. A whole tradition of sociology has backed this interpretation up with phrases such as,

"The middle class parents take more interest in their children's progress at school than the manual working class parents do, and they become relatively more interested as their children grow older".

(DOUGLAS, 1964; 52)

I, given the above analysis, would interpret this as middle class parents taking a lot more interest in their boys progress in middle class schools that complement their social pattern, than working class parents do in an institution that is directed against their way of life and family. Those sociologists of working class culture discussed in the last ~~Section~~ <sup>Chapter</sup> have a similar pathological analysis,

13 Especially Plowdon (1966)

14 Notably around Douglas (1964)

"Established principles of child training and dietetics are often brushed aside because the older folk disapprove of them or because the mothers are lazy or indifferent and let the children go their own way. Schools are places where children are taught and teachers are paid to teach the children. Some children in the worst areas, it is complained, come to school first at the age of 5½, having received no training whatsoever from the parents and with little idea of discipline and orderliness. Their homes are entirely bookless".  
(MAYS, T.B., 1967; 89-90)

Linking this with historical analyses of the working class family and culture one is led to agree with the substance of the analysis but not with any measure of surprise at it. Of course the education system and working class culture is in conflict, that is what was intended by the 19th Century educationists and also by the members of the Plowden committee. For the education system is designed as an "enormously ambitious attempt to determine through the capture by educational means the patterns of thought sentiment and behaviour of the working class" (JOHNSON, 1970; 119)

(C) The creation of a disciplined labour force

Obviously both of the above strands in the meaning of education will reflect upon the creation of a disciplined labour force also, but this was and is still given great importance by the educators, both in the 19th Century and the present day.

The factory system of production was essential to the making of profit and this system of production needed



a discipline of a much greater sort than the pre-capitalist mode of production. The creation of the necessary discipline was and still is one of the greatest difficulties for the bourgeoisie.

"The first need of society is order. If order is to be produced in men and women, what kind of preparation for it is that which leaves the children as wild as young ostriches in the desert? When for the first 10 or 12 years of life there has been no discipline either in life or body, when cleanliness has been unknown, when no law of God or man has been considered sacred, and no power recognised but direct physical force - is it to be expected that they will quietly and industriously settle down in mills, workshops, warehouses or at any trade in the orderly routine of any family, to work continuously by day, morning and evening, from Monday till Saturday? The expectation is absurd. Continuous labour and sober thoughts are alike impossible to them".

(MANCHESTER, 1866; )

The problem of getting the workers to their work place on early Monday morning was one that had direct financial relevance since constant absenteeism and lateness meant that a factory would not run at full profit-making efficiency. It was important to ensure that the workers turned up on time and obeyed orders as a matter of course. Once more education was seen as a solution to this problem.

"In some of the mills where schools have been established and the attendance regularly enforced the mill-owners have assured me that great improvements in the conduct and habits of the children had

been early evident and that the difficulties are not so great as they apprehended."

(SAUNDERS, (1835; 156)

and

"I am assured that the younger classes, in every case where their education is based on any sound and regular system are deriving much benefit from it, and that the training consequent upon such order and regularity, is securing a greater degree of subordination than was expected."

(SAUNDERS, 1838; 442)

The emphasis on discipline and order in schools is still of great importance. At the quotation in the Preface from Jack Common he said that at school the best prizes go for punctuality. Jackson quotes from a very explicit pamphlet handed out at Morning Assembly at a Huddersfield secondary modern school.

"Laziness makes all things difficult but industry makes all easy; and he that <sup>or</sup> riveth late must trot all day and shall scarce overtake his business at night; while laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him.

One of the aims of our school is to help us to have the right attitude to work at all times not simply when it is interesting but also when it is hard and tedious; no work is interesting and new all the time. We should remember that employment is not provided just so that we can earn money. Naturally we need money in order to live but another important purpose of work is to produce something or to serve other people".

(quoted in JACKSON, 1967; 97-8)

The reaction to this part of the meaning of education on the part of the boys in Sunderland is very clear. The interpretation of one class' solution is the problem for the other is very clear

(D) The creation of a national hierachy based upon education

Throughout the 19th Century and particularly after 1867 Reform Act there were attempts to create a unitary ideology that would unite English capitalist society (YOUNG, N. 1967) under one set of values. It was important for the bourgeoisie to create a criteria of hierachy that they could ensure their continued ascending <sup>ency</sup> ~~in~~.

With the passing of the 1867 Reform Act and the enfranchisement of the urban working class this call for an education system for directly political purposes was to become even more strident. R.Lowe, an educational administrator, who had opposed the extention of the franchise, felt that once the urban working class had been given voting power, education was a necessary concomitant. He followed the teaching of Bentham and Mill in saying "I believe it to be absolutely necessary to compel our future masters to learn their letters". (LOWE, R. quoted in MARTIN Vol. III; 1893; 323) Consequently Lowe launched a series of speeches and pamphlets which not only elucidated the reasons why a national system of education was necessary to the survival of "our Constitution" but the way in which this system would protect it. Since the voice of the Government had been placed in the hands of the working class, the provision of compulsory education is "a question of self-<sup>p</sup>-~~r~~eservation, a question of existence". (DOWE, R.; 1867; 8-10) The state must compel the foundation of schools, levying a compulsory rate for their maintenance; schools once established, compulsory attendance must be enforced. A radical reform of

upper-class education is urged on the same grounds. If the lower classes must now be educated "to qualify them for the power that has passed into their hands" (LOWE, 1867; 31-2) then the higher classes must be educated differently because, whilst actual political power had passed out of their hands, they must preserve their position by superior education and superior cultivation. Above all this education must be up to date so that they "know the things that the working men know, only know them infinitely better in their principals and in their details"; thereby they can "assert their superiority over the workers, a superiority assured by greater intelligence and greater civilisation" and so "conquer back by means of a wider and more enlightened cultivation some of the influence which they have lost by political change". (LOWE, R. 1867; 9-10)

Lowe states with crystal clarity that political reasons must dictate educational change, and equally clear about the political and educational ideas that it is to serve. It is vital for the working classes to be educated that they may appreciate and defer to a higher cultivation when they meet it, and the higher classes ought to be educated in a very different manner in order that they "may exhibit to the lower classes that higher education to which, if it were shown to them, they would bow down and defer". (LOWE, R., 1867; 32) In short what Lowe was arguing for was the recognition by the upper classes that they must teach the working classes a hierarchy in society based on cultivation and education that will automatically mean that the lower classes will recognise themselves as inferior on this scale. He was creating a system that would ensure the subordination of the working classes with their own agreement.

These then were the four major strands of thinking in the use of education as a means of social control. Presented like this they are simply sets of arguments. Similarly I could construct from the different language of working class life a series of arguments in favour of the working class idea of education. Though for this thesis what is important is the interpretation of education as an ideological concept, one of whose many meanings has become dominant.

This particular set of meanings became dominant gradually between 1830 and 1870 by means of the Inspectors of education who ~~refused~~<sup>used</sup> as much as possible to give grants to those schools that had working men in their Board of Management for as one Inspector put it,

"We cannot let farmers or labourers, miners or mechanics, be judges of our educational work. It is part of that work to educate them all into a sense of what true education is".

(MINUTES, 1857; 478)

However, following the 1867 Reform Act that this definition attained its hegemony by means of the 1870 Education Act<sup>15</sup>. As has been said above the proximity of these two Acts was no accident - the one had to follow as far as the bourgeoisie were concerned. All the religious difficulties that had held up a national system of education became less important and there was a greater "sense of the political necessity that Parliament should make adequate provision for the education of the people". (KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH; 1868)

15 "Lowe's experience in education and his position of Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Gladstone administration formed in Dec. 1868 ensured that he was influential in the events leading to the 1870 Act". (SIMON, B. 1960;356)

Once the Education Act was passed and compulsory education enforced some years later the ideological nature of education became a lot more obscured. As Simon has said, "Robert Lowe, Kay-Shuttleworth and the class for which they spoke might continue with endeavour to use elementary education as a means to stabilise society, though from the moment that the working class as a whole had access to literacy such education aims were no longer openly proclaimed - instead class policies were to be disguised by educational phraseology". (1960; 365)

Yet whilst this is true, the nature of this phraseology is not too opaque. The nature of such ideas as low educational attainments; school phobia; educational failure; the problem of early school leaving can still all be ideologically unravelled.

It could be argued that some of the changes in 'education' since 1870 have in fact constituted a change in the substantive meaning of the term, and that therefore the whole drift of this section has been overcome by events. The most notable apparent substantive change of meaning has been the gradual introduction of the idea of child centred education or working class relevant education. Yet how would this effect the main strategy of the educationists. Johnson discusses Kay-Shuttleworth's ideas about using working class culture as the basis for education.

"Certain aspects of working class culture too were not condemned outright, commonly the more folksy, Merrie England aspects: Cornish Parish feasts, some forms of singing, some sports. Yet even amusements like these were commonly regarded as instruments to be moulded to new uses. Singing here was the outstanding example witness the efforts of the Department,

of John Hullah and of Kay himself to capture or to infiltrate a genuinely popular pursuit. As Kay puts it 'the songs of any people may be regarded as an important means of forming an industrious brave, loyal and religious working class'. They might 'inspire cheerful views of industry' and 'associate amusements with duties'".

(JOHNSON, P.; 1970)

In 1947 an H.M.S.O. Publication 'School and Life' followed on in this line of education,

"What the school teacher should be connected with is the environment. That the curriculum should be so designed as to interpret the environment to the boys and girls who are growing up in it".

Both of these quotes betray attempts from outside of working class culture to use that culture as a means of making 'education' more effective. "Curricula should be designed to interpret the environment" rather than curricula being totally of that environment. The line of thinking from Kay-Shuttleworth to Newsom is that of a national education system from outside the working class trying to change the habits and sentiments of that culture. It represents the onslaught of one group of a society upon the youth of another group and ~~as~~ needs to be understood as an attempt to change the working class.

If we return to the diagram of different solutions and problems for different classes, then it is possible to view the education system as a series of specific solutions to problems. If we take up the dialectical effect of these solutions then we can see the way in which they become problems for working class boys. The exact nature of these problems for these boys (i.e. the exact nature of the

solution of education in 1973 for the bourgeoisie) cannot be understood APART from the exact nature of the boys response to that problem. The above section is VITAL to provide some historical persepctive to the problem of compulsory education. Without it the next movement in the dialectic of problem/solution of truancy or deviancy cannot be understood.

Nevertheless the real importance of it can only be understood in relationship to the immediate lived experience of going to school for these boys.

### THE BOYS SOLUTIONS

In the remainder of this section it is important to keep the first part of the interaction in the forefront of the mind for these boys responses are not isolated pieces of action. In cultural terms the boys action in the education system must be understood as solutions to the problems that they perceive the education system creating for them.

The overriding problem that the research revealed about school was its existence as an institution that compelled attendance. This is a banal statement. 'Everyone knows' that school is compulsory; 'Everyone knows' that boys don't like going to school that "boys will be boys". Yet if everyone does know this why is the compulsory nature of schooling not so conspicuous from the studies of the sociology of education? Why are there so few explicit studies of why boys don't like school? Is it treated as a natural trait like boys being 'naturally mischievous'? Why is it necessary to compel attendance at school and why is school not liked? These were the two questions that seemed important in the light of my historical analysis of



the education system AND in the light of preliminary responses to the pilot questionnaire and interviews. For I was informed in no uncertain terms ~~that school~~ why school was attended

In a sentence completion question " "I came to school because ....." the answers were as follows:

Compulsion	52 (Its the law; I have to; Me Mum would get put in prison)
Muck teacher about	13 (To have a laugh at the teacher)
To learn	18 (To do my lessons)
It is good	5 (I enjoy it; it is good)
No answer	5

93

In a complex way the very nature of this answer gives us clues for two things. That for over 50 of the boys they don't like school and they perceive their attendance there only because of compulsion. This is important since most of the cultural solutions to something not liked are to get around it, to <sup>dodge</sup> it, to try to get away. Thus if the boys go to a youth club that they feel they get nothing out of they leave it (see <sup>Chapter</sup> ~~Section~~ 4 - Spare Time Group 1). Yet even if they get nothing out of school they HAVE to attend. Indeed, rather obviously the State makes school compulsory and backs up attendance with its full power precisely because it anticipated that boys would get nothing out of the experience - so they would have to be made to go. The solution of trying to get out of an unrewarding experience is important since it leads us better to understand the following solution to the problem of compulsory attendance.

Klein notes (amid her discussion of the way the "normal Western child begins to learn the distinctions between right and wrong") (KLEIN, 1965; 17) that the relationship of the

working class child to authority is not unsurprisingly, shaped by his experiences at home with his parents. But Klein says these children learn only one rule of behaviour that is regularly enforced, "steer clear of trouble, give in to a stronger force. On the street as in the home, there is a constant aggressively hinged excitement. Parents shout at neighbours and at their children. When they can get away with it children shout back. Adults cuff or thrash children, who will do the same to those who are weaker than themselves. Through it all the mother is constantly talking at the child issuing orders that are not carried out. All this adds to the unreliability of the environment in ... The inconsistent treatment confirms the child's general experience of life ... What the child does may at one time be smiled at indulgently or even proudly, and at another time be greeted with a shout or a blow... This kind of do-as-you like indulgence gives the home a connotation of refuge, of safety from the demands of the outside world. Like any other child, (he) is homesick and very pleased when he does not have to go to school. But in this particular case the home is a refuge from demands which, if they are inescapable and must be met, shape the personality to be well-adjusted to modern civilised standards of living... If they find a situation disturbing or unpleasant they give the easy, obvious response if there is one or they quickly reject the whole situation". (KLEIN, 1965; 19-21)

Thus we see that the learnt reaction to an unpleasant situation is to remove themselves from it. The attitude to authority of the young child is to ignore it if you don't agree with it or to remove yourself from its control. Similarly Hoggard and Jackson describe the whole cultural

response to authority. At first ignore it and it may well go away. Secondly try and remove yourself from it as much as possible. Thirdly, if the others fail, to recognise it only as far as it has the power to enforce recognition. The alternative cultural option of refusal to recognise authority despite its power is only rarely used within working class culture since it is a cultural solution that can be recognised as creating more problems, whether in terms of defiance of foremen or laws or just of father. At no stage in any of the writings on British working class culture do any of the writers ever suggest that the working class child, or indeed working class culture as a whole, in any way complies with authority because it agrees with a moral set of rules. Indeed they all stress the impossibility of a child ever being able to comply with a consistent set of moral rules, though all of them provide examples of a lack of set of moral rules, by referring simply to the middle class set of rules, that Klein refers to throughout as normal.

Therefore the attitudes to authority that provide the boys framework for coping with the problems of school, is characterised by an immediate attempt to remove yourself from anything unpleasant, secondly to ignore it and lastly to comply with it only as far as its power imposes itself. Therefore the demands of the school are at first seen as meaningless. They are ignored, just as the demands made by mother were ignored, and then <sup>e</sup>fiercely resented when it becomes evident that the authorities mean their demands are met.

I have already outlined the ways in which the State ensures that its demands are met through compulsory schooling, but to what extent is it possible to make

education compulsory. The school board men, education, welfare officers, police and courts can enforce the law to the utmost and this law is meant to enforce attendance at school. But like all laws and enforcements it follows a distinctive pattern and cannot create a complete acquiescence. This not only means that boys can break the law and get away with it but that the law cannot as an instrument enforce compliance with its spirit, i.e. that people should go to school to learn. Thus whilst it is true that the authorities at school mean that the demands of the education system are to be met, this does not present a problem for the boys that is cultural insolvable. They realise that attendance at school is compulsory very quickly and that this is the main reason for attendance, but the extent of power behind the idea of compulsory attendance is limited, it is by no means complete.

The major cultural solution to the problem has been that of truancy. One could imagine a different response from a group that had a different cultural frame of reference. For example if a lecturer in a university made his lectures compulsory because no-one was coming to them since they found them of no consequence it is possible to believe that they would try and persuade him to change his mind. Further they would argue with him around the idea of freedom of choice etc. and if that failed they would try and apply collective political pressure in the shape of petitions, pressure from the students union etc. If all else failed a collective obviously organised boycott may be organised. All of these sets of options are not part of the experience of the boys and so are not open to them.

The exact nature of truancy as solutions to the problems created by an education system that is trying to change you is a complex one. For by the age of 14 a number of crucial lessons have been learnt by the boys. Most obviously and importantly the power behind the compulsory nature of schooling are very visible to the boys. Of the several questions about truancy asked in questionnaire and interview, the importance of the sanction was constantly mentioned by boys, whereas those who thought truancy wrong because it were bad were only small in number. The major restraint upon increased truancy therefore was a recognition of power rather than compliance through agreement.

Thus of the 27 boys who would try and persuade their friend not to play truant only 6 said that they would persuade him because it was bad. (Because its a bad thing to do'- Humph; 'Its not right'- Bill; 'Because its very wrong to play truant' - Phil). Of the others there was a very shrewd perception of the power of the state both in extent and in particulars. "I would never do it because in the end they nearly always get caught" - Jimmy; "Because he might get into serious trouble if he was caught" - Derek M, are answers that betray a knowledge of the extent to which truancy is linked in the boys mind with power of a great nature. The specifics of this power are outlined by others from both inside the school "Because if you do, when you get back you will be caned and you will get a black mark" - Pete, but more often power outside the school "Its none of my business its the school board man's job" - Chas, and more specifically "Because he might get caught and he

16 Suppose a close friend of yours was thinking of playing truant, would you try and talk him out of it? YES 27; NO 64; N.A. 2 WHY? BAD 6; GET INTO TROUBLE 22; UP TO HIM 47; GO WITH HIM 13; N.A. 5.

might have to go to court" - Bob, where the sanctions are only too well known; "Because he could be put away and not get a job at all" - Harry; "To stop him from getting himself put in a home" - Mike. So within the frame of reference of the boys all these powerful forces are arraigned against the truant so when a boy says he will try and advise his friend not to play truant we should not take it as any part of agreement with the school for the reasoning behind is basically summed up by the process described by one boy - "Well the DAY will be over soon, but he would get wronged and may be put on probation" - Johnny. Thus as found before compliance with rules is enforced by power and to enforce a rule completely the sanctions must be seen to be greater than the pain of compliance. Indeed as will have been noticed the boys use the phrase wrong and wronged to describe NOT rights and wrongs but to describe getting into trouble as in "He gets wrong for that", i.e. he gets into trouble.

Thus the 37 boys that say that they never played truant<sup>17</sup> in the last year do not necessarily agree with and support the major values that they are being taught to accept at school, but are much more likely to be afraid of the consequences of their action. Indeed only 9 boys said that they played truant, and it would appear therefore that in terms of compliance with the rule of attendance that the State had won the conflict by means of its power.

17	Truant:	Never	37;	One or two	38;
		Several times	5;	Often	9;
		No answer	4		

However, this is not the case, for continuing the analogy of guerrilla warfare, whilst it is true that the State has vast power to stop truancy and to enforce attendance; the boys use the very size of the power against them to get around the rules of attendance. In other words the school ~~needs~~ the State to enforce attendance at school but that this attendance then becomes perceived not as real attendance, i.e. being in school from 9 till 4, but rather as the ticks in the register that the headmaster reports to the education welfare department. Thus having created an institution to enforce attendance the education system comes to believe the reports to this system as a measurement of success.

But the boys know that attendance is not simply a matter of compliance with the register but is a matter of sitting through lesson after lesson. This is something that they use against the school, attendance for registration and then missing those lessons that are more boring than others. In this way the boys are not strictly playing truant and as such would not admit to it in a self-report survey, for truancy is a serious matter where sanctions are high. Skipping this lesson or that is still ensuring that they maintain some control over the situation, still not having to stay at school all the time, yet it does not carry the heavy sanctions of truancy for it is a matter between an individual teacher and the boys. At worst the headmaster is brought into the matter but never the police courts and approved schools.

There was a real fault in the methodology here, but one that it was difficult if not impossible to avoid. For there is an official term 'truancy' which means leaving school all day and then there is a term the boys use,

"dolling-off" which is a translation for truancy, but is ALSO about the skipping of odd lessons. Consequently it is not clear which is being talked about by the lads and in the interview they were asked to specify as much as possible.

In its mildest form not going to lessons was outlined by one boy,

"What do you think about boys that play truant?

Derek - Well there again, its a boring lesson. I'll give you an instance. There was a lesson with a cookery teacher and it should have been science and we just sat and read about cookery. Every week she used to say, if you behaved yourself you would have been out on the grass this week, well that used to be said every week. So boys started to drift out and they got caught and told off."

In terms of explanation and justification the State would never say that people should go to school as an isolated piece of action, rather they relate it to the purpose of the school. Similarly the action of non-attendance must be linked with the purpose of non-attendance, for it is absurd to discuss the techniques used by the boys devoid of the feelings behind them. Consequently this drifting out can only be viewed as a deliberate withdrawal from an environment that is unpleasant in some way. This particular environment brought forth the solution of drifting out because it was meaningless to the boys.

This is replicated again and again in the boys answers.

"What do you think of boys that play truant?

Albert - I've played truant, its just because you get so sick of school. In engineering drawing I stopped off because there's this teacher and he is



always picking on you and its hard and I don't know what to do so I just stay off.

Why do you think boys play truant?

Albert - Its just like with teachers who are saying things that are too hard to do. They get sick of teachers who are just picking on them and sending them out of the class and that so they don't go."

It is precisely for cases such as this that education was made compulsory. If boys could leave when they decided that the teacher had overstepped the mark then the whole institution is undermined. Yet even with the full power of the State it is not possible to make the institution watertight, the boys have understood the weakness of the system and whilst it is still not easy have conceived of this strategy of coping with classes in which they 'don't know what to do' they stay off.

"Why do you doll off?

Dick - Well last Wednesday afternoon, it was because we were getting P.E. and we were getting running and they make you run round the pitches six or seven times and if you didn't go they caned you and if you cut the corners you'd get hit. Sometimes I haven't got my kit and some lessons if I haven't done my homework I'll stop off.

So its on specific things?

Dick - Yes I would stop off a lesson if I didn't feel like it".

How do the boys exercise this solution to the problem of school? For as Klein has said this environment is meant to be enforced and to be one without escape, the fact that these boys have discovered an escape from those things that they least like, must detract from the

completeness of the school experience. I believe it represents a simple learning of the weakness of the system of sanctions involved. For if the school has failed to persuade the boys of its own usefulness (and Klein has deemed this impossible because of the lack of moral sense for the school to build on as also the education itself admits its failure at this task by making the education system compulsory. However the nature of the boys own dissociation from the values of the school will be discussed later in this section) then it is only left with compulsion and for that it depends upon an efficient system of enforcement and giving out of sanctions. But the school is hampered as an institution that enforces rules by the fact <sup>of the small</sup> ~~that there is~~ a proportion of rule enforcers to rule. Sykes' analysis of prisons as institutions of power is helpful here, as he correctly points out the dual nature of power in the institution by the two sets of analysis that revolve around the ideas that the guards and officers of the prison have total power via,

"The detailed regulations extending into every area of the individual's life, the constant surveillance, the concentration of power into the hands of a ruling few, the wide gulf between the rulers and the ruled - all are elements of what we would call a totalitarian regime. The threat of force is close beneath the surface of custodial institutions and it is the invisible fist that regulates the prisoners activities".

(SYKES)

Literally the fist is a little more prevalent out in the open at school because the children are physically

weaker<sup>18</sup> but the concentration of power is true as in prisons. However, the other part of Sykes analysis that the exercise of this power depended heavily on the inmates co-operation is also true of the school. For the problems of surveillance and enforcement are just as great at school since there is such a large disparity of numbers between the controllers and the controlled.

However, there are a number of vital areas where the degree of co-operation elicited by the prisoners will be greater than that elicited from the pupils. Obviously the difference between a total and a non-total institution is of great importance. The boys know that there are many things that the teachers dare not do because of parents and the outside community; the prisoner rightly feels that he cannot depend upon such support since his visibility and political position is much weaker. Consequently the boys know that there are limitations to what the teachers can do to them but the prisoners do not. Most importantly though the boys know that there is a fixed sentence with no remission possible, nor any extension. The co-operation of the prisoners is greatly facilitated by the concepts of remission and parole for good behaviour. Since the boys that we are discussing cannot be affected by the ideas of remission for good behaviour there has to be another method of obtaining their co-operation. This method is discussed in chapter 5 (school - work) within the concept of good behaviour - good results - good job - more money status. As is fully elucidated there this chain of cause and effect

18 How often is someone hit in this school?

Every lesson	12;	Every day	39;
Every week	32;	Never	10

is not persuasive to these boys; it does not affect their action since the links in the causal and behavioural chain between good behaviour at school and more money at work is for the most part beyond their capability. Not that they simply can't understand it, but that they find it not possible to comprehend in terms of personal action.

Therefore the methods of obtaining co-operation in acceding to the rules that each institution needs do not affect these boys. Once more they are affected only by sanctions, but as has been said of both educational and penal institutions this is insufficient because of the lack of enforcers and an inefficient system of catching offenders. It is this knowledge that informs the boys actions in removing themselves from the areas of school that they don't like. Since lessons last for 40 minutes it is difficult for each teacher to keep track of each pupil and thus the role of attendance cannot be enforced. This is especially true of lessons that are not taking place in the classic educational and control institution of the typical classroom. It is very difficult to notice that Stanley isn't belting round the playing field if you have forty others doing it too; similarly in engineering, drawing, music, art, woodwork, science. In English and Maths though the situation is more difficult.

It is this sort of pragmatic consideration, concerned almost totally with the enforcement of sanctions that the boys take into account in finding their specific solution to the problem of school.

"Why do boys play truant?

William - They play it at their own risk.

Why do they do it?

William - To get out of lessons so that they don't

get wronged.

So they dont get wronged...

William - Yes they decide not to go.

Why don't boys do it more often?

William - They get caught."

Since it is clear that these boys only stay in school for things that they dont like, by means of the efficacy of the application of the rules and sanctions applied to keep them there, it seems important to try and fully appreciate what are those things that they experientially find difficult about the education system, also their perception of the nature of punishment. This is difficult, in so far as experientially, the boys dislike of ~~school~~ the education system as a whole is linked inextricably with their hatred for the Mr . Scroggins who always bashes them in chemistry.

#### CO-OPERATION BY SOME BOYS -TOTAL AGREEMENT OR PARTIAL?

now do the boys feel about the education system. Their attitudes and actions with regards to truancy as outlined above obviously gives us some important information. If they thought school was interesting or in any way part of them, then the language and action towards absenting themselves from it would have been different.

Perhaps therefore it is possible to start off by saying that only a very few of the boys had feelings towards the education system that could be described as positive. These boys seemed to have experienced the education system in a very different way from their peers, for whilst none of the boys felt that the environment of school was totally non-hostile these boys were different. An example will illustrate this point.

Rather than ask, "Do you like school"? I attempted in form of a question to recreate an experienced situation for the boys with regards to school by asking: "At the start of a new term are you glad to be coming back to school?" Yes (1) No (2) "Why do you feel this way? Will you be glad when you have finally left school?" Yes No. "Why do you feel this way?"

The answers to the first question came as a surprise in that 48 boys were glad to be returning with only 44 not glad. This apparently betrayed a joy at the thought of experiencing the education system that seemed to undermine much of what was expected. However any analysis of their answers to Why they felt this way? showed a very different set of ideas about the end of holidays. These were coded with five sets of answers.

'A'	'See my friends at school'	7
'B'	'Get bored during the holidays'	29
'C'	'Pro-school'	10
'D'	'Anti-school'	31
'E'	'Pro-holidays'	13
	No answer	3

Thus of the majority of boys who wanted to come back to school only 10 felt any pro-school ideas ("I am glad because when I leave school I hope to have a good set of

qualifications for a job" - Richard; "I am glad to come back to school because I like lessons" - Peter;) most of them talked of the boredom of holidays ("I am glad to come back to school because I am bored with the holidays" - Adam) and the attraction of friends at school ("Yes - well sometimes its boring and you have friends there - Derek).

Continuing to concentrate upon this set of ideas about education that see it as a rewarding experience, the boys were asked the same questions in the interview, and one boy explained the rewarding nature of school in some detail,

"In the list of questions I asked you you said that you were glad to be coming back to school at the start of a new term. Why do you feel this way?

Robert - Well you learn more things and it gives you a better chance for a job and if your holidays could be like instead of six weeks in the summer and two weeks at Christmas it would be better like if it were four weeks at Christmas and four weeks at summer as then you still get the same amount of study in.

So you think that the important thing about school is the amount of study that you get in?

Robert - Especially for the jobs nowadays ~~as~~ even in shipyards you need C.S.E.

Why do you think that some boys get better qualifications than others?

Robert - Some boys get better qualifications as they understand the work more easy than other people such as in maths I might be able to get a few right but I can't understand it. Its just the way different teachers explain it.

So it's a combination of being able to understand it

and the way that the teachers explain it, I mean why is it that you can't get the idea of maths, is it because of you or the teachers?

Robert - Well last year when I was in 3H2 the teacher was Mr. Haroldson, he wasn't going mathematical all the way if you couldn't understand anything, he used to change it to english or something like that. But now with 4A1 with Mr. Willerby he sticks mainly in mathematical terms as 4A1 is just like the group that he had last year except for about four people".

This boy would appear to find the experience of education valuable and rewarding for him within the terms of the system itself. The process of working hard for better qualifications is more fully explained in Chapter 5, but it is important to mention that there are those who experience school this way and therefore do not feel it as conflictual. The extent of this feeling differed from boy to boy and none of the boys experienced school totally in the terms of the education system. But there was a small group of boys who found some level of reward in educational terms, from the school. They liked to work in class, they thought the teachers helped them if they did something wrong, and together with these attitudes and feelings of agreement with the education system they had a set of ideas about those of their peers that took part in conflictual action. Truancy was actively bad, a boy who was cheeky with teacher was wrong to do it, and that overall this group felt that many of their fellow pupils interfered with the smooth running of the school, and that this was a bad thing. Once more this betrays the fact that they gained something from the education system because its disruption was felt to be directly harmful to them. These



attitudes and ideas about action tended to cluster but it would be rash to say that there was any hard cross-correlation between attitudes since the theory and method of the research denies the possibility of this. It is also even more invidious to attempt to select a causal factor out of all the others and claim this causes the boys to obtain some educational reward from the system. Instead it is important to note that for a minority of working class pupils there seems to be some rapport between the education system and themselves upon the terms of that education system, and that the nature of that rapport is concerned with the obtaining of better jobs after leaving school. Whilst it might seem a strong exercise to point out things that do not exist (e.g. there was no evidence of x or y) it does seem relevant to point out that even amongst these boys there was no evidence of seeing education as being useful for its own sake, or for the sake of learning, or extending the self. Those that found the experience rewarding, found it rewarding in a very specific way, and much of the experience remains a mystery and something unintelligible. Thus this group of boys stop short of the type of co-operation expected by teachers and those in authority, for only seven of them said that they would tell the teacher in order to stop a friend of theirs from being beaten up by a group of boys. So even to save a friend from being beaten up they would not involve the authority structure of the school. In any understanding of active co-operation with the school this must count as a very limited amount. Thus the sort of answer that they gave to the question "In class I like to .." was missed (e.g. Talk and do good work - Pete ) in that as far as the teacher is concerned these two may be very different and contradictory actions.

The evidence about this group of boys does not lead me to believe that they have internalised the values of the education system and base their actions upon them in a one for one relationship. Rather that they have internalised some of the ideas and carry out some of the actions whilst also having some of the ideas and actions of their fellow pupils. For the nature of the experience of school for these boys is different from that of their pupils. All that can be said with any basis about this difference is that the smaller group of boys find something rewarding about that experience - the most likely nature of this reward is connected with the work hard at school - get more money at work ideology outlined in Chapter 5 and above. However the nature of this rewarding experience is rarely expressed in terms of the complete set of bourgeois values.

Given that there is a small group of boys that actively agree with some of the educational values that they experience at school, the nature and extent of the disagreement or disassociation of the others must be the basis of the rest of this section.

In the definition of education outlined in the historical section a great deal of stress was put on the changing of the attitudes and behaviour of boys through the discipline and the mode of institution of school rather than the actual content of the day-to-day curricula. In terms of the way the boys were meant to learn from the experience of school the sorts of things that were meant to be taught was the punctuality of attendance at school, the fact that one learnt that it was wrong to talk in class, the idea that it was right to obey the teacher; that one should work hard and try one's best. All these

are to be understood within the framework of the bourgeois values as outlined by Cohen A.K. (1955) and Hargreaves D. (1967). Thus we have presented school not as a place where boys are taught reading and writing as the major aspect of the institution, rather that they are taught to follow instructions, such as punctuality and discipline, and incidentally learn to read and write.

Confronted with this process in educating Cohen A.K. (1955) and Hargreaves D. (1967) both claim that the boys internalise these values, and yet finding them impossible to obtain, reject them and hold on to their opposites. There is no evidence from my research for this oversimplistic process whatsoever. As outlined in <sup>Chapter</sup> ~~Section~~ 2 the boys have to cope with these values because they are held by powerful others and it is only the power of the institution that elicits compliance. This process was recognised in the creation of the education system since a whole series of sanctions were created to force the children's attendance at school and once attending to force their compliance. It is important to realise though that the end result of all these sanctions was to create an environment where the attitudes and behaviour of the working class boys would be changed by the internalisation of values and ways of living. So the system that was to attempt to change the "hearts and minds" of the working class by means of 'teaching' certain values and ways of living, yet it was realised that the only way that this was possible was by the use of force, since without force and sanctions the boys would not even be in the institution that was trying to change their way of life.

Thus the behaviour and experience of boys at school in Sunderland is effected by the values implicit and

explicit in the education system. The boys discussed above were described as finding something experientially rewarding from the institutions of education. But it would be putting it too strongly to infer that these boys had internalised the values of the education system and were acting upon them. Rather they felt that certain parts of the institution rewarded them in specific situations.

For most of the boys discussed below though there was a general disassociation between their behaviour and the values of the school. In the jargon of imperialist war, the school did not win their hearts and minds. Given this though, it is necessary to explain the compliance of some of their behaviour with some of the school values. This will be noticed as a reversal of that which I characterised as the usual position of explanation of deviancy (see Chapter 1) where it is assumed that the values are internalised and the question to be asked is why they are periodically not adhered to. I will argue that this behaviour is only intelligible through their compliance with the perceived structure of power.

Already in discussing 'truancy' I have mentioned the perception of school as a place where over half of the boys attend only by compulsion. Whilst another group see it as a place where they can have fun at the expense of teachers. It is not a realistic appraisal of the sort of evidence gathered in this research to try and create groups of boys that are more disenchan<sup>g</sup>ed with school than others. For whilst an answer (to the question I came to school because..) of the nature of - "I am made to by law" - Eddy, or "My mum makes me" - James, are different from "You get fun with the smelly teachers" - Michael or "Its good being cheeky to teachers" - Fred, one cannot be said to represent greater

disassociation than the other. Rather they represent different reactions to the failure of the school to obtain their attendance and the attention of the children by the means of the indoctrination of the 'value of education'

Thus in the following section I will discuss these boys' attitudes and behaviour towards teachers, their activity and experience in classrooms and their experience of sanctions in the school.

### TEACHERS AS "BIG-HEADS"

In any day-by-day understanding of the school it is impossible to ignore the boys' experiences of the teacher. Whilst I would argue <sup>together</sup> with (YOUNG, <sup>M.</sup> 1971) that the sociology of education has limited itself much too rigidly to the teacher-pupil interaction as the focus of its study, I still feel that the teacher plays an important role in the boys experience. How important is that role and how does it relate the boys total experience of education?

In the pilot survey, I was surprised at the consistency with which the boys used the phrase 'big-heads' to describe teachers. The use of this word so exclusively could have represented a school-bound fashion (i.e. all teachers in Municipal school are called by the label 'big-head' traditionally) rather than bearing any close relationship to the way in which teachers treated boys or even the way they experienced it. Consequently boys were asked specifically in interviews about the phrase and the way they experienced the teacher.

The phrase 'big-head' does imply a different sort of perceived relationship from another label i.e. it is possible for the boys to write "I think teachers are... smelly", which conveys a derogatory idea but without the

connotations of big-head. The answers though to this question were not all derogatory.

I think teachers are ...

Derogatory personal	38	(Big-heads; bastards, fucking crap; smelly and ugly)
Derogatory professional	21	(Bad teachers; too strict; useless as teachers)
All right	16	(Not too bad; all right)
Good	13	(Good; good teachers)
No answer	5	

The distinction between the first two groups is based upon the language used about the teacher rather than any substantive distinction, since the trend of argument in this section is that when the boys call teacher a fucking bastard they are criticising him as a teacher rather than as Mr. Smith. In other words Mr. Brown is smelly and ugly because he is a teacher treating me as a pupil.

Thus 14 boys used the words big-head in their answer to the question with 4 mentioning conceit and show-off. The remaining derogatory personal remarks were surprising in their viciousness. As has been mentioned above there was little swearing in the answers /interviews but much of it was used in this answer. Teachers were fucking crap - Ian; bastards - Ivan; fucking mad - Charlie P.; a load of shit - Fred S.; smelly and ugly - Dick B.; pigs - Albert. Whilst given the historical and structural outline, it should be expected that these teachers were viciously hated the level of venom expressed by some boys was very great. The professional criticism of the teachers were in a very different language. These referred to specific grievances (not fair because they treat girls different from boys - Mike N.) to the little more generalised complaint - (very

misunderstanding; not friendly - Bill; too strict - Dave; too soft - Bruce) to the totally generalised (terrible - Steve). Those boys that reserved their judgements were either grudging (alright for teachers - Douglas) more specific and extreme (some are all right, some are bastards - Wyn) or tautological (quite good because they are not always bad - David). Those who liked the teachers were either general (good - Phil) or more specific in their praise (mainly good and nicely treating teachers - John; very understanding - Eric).

The important question of discipline and sanctions is dealt with elsewhere. What is relevant here is the perception of the teacher that lay behind the boys experience of discipline rules etc. The idea that in fact teachers are not in contact with the boys as human beings but rather treating them as roles, is relevant to the way the boys then see the teacher carrying out discipline. Thus the two statements were included in the check list,

Teachers don't really care what	Strongly agree	17
happens to me they're just	Agree	45
doing a job	Disagree	19
	Strongly disagree	9
	No answer	3
Teachers don't understand	Strongly agree	28
the boys	Agree	39
	Disagree	15
	Strongly disagree	7

which create the impression that two-thirds of the boys experience the teacher as quite some distance from them and are only brought into contact with them by the job. Thus the interactions of the classroom can be depicted as one that is seen as being either financially compulsory

for the teacher or legally compulsory for the boys.

However it is crucial to remember that this interaction is not experienced by the boys as simply another group of individuals with different ideas that don't understand us, but rather as a group of people who have some power over us and who believe they are right in trying to modify our behaviour. This interpretation was borne out by the interviews where the simple idea of distance was insufficient to explain the boys experience of the interaction.

"Do you think teachers understand boys?

William - I don't think they understand. They're just a long way away.

What do you mean?

William - I ..... dunno just not like us and they push us around.

Some boys said that they thought teachers were big-heads.

William - Yes because they crack us. I got a crack today in metalwork.

What was that for?

William - Mr. Hills when he comes past anybody he just cracks them.

Any reason?

William - No he just cracks them. Sometimes he uses a piece of wood. Don't need reason."

"Do you think teachers understand boys?

Jimmy - Some of them don't they just hit you for anything. As I said some teachers you, like, have a bit of fun with, but some others don't understand you if you're bored or anything like that.

Some boys thought teachers were big-heads. What do



you think?

Jimmy - Some of them are like Mr. Carruthers and that pick on you for anything. Even if you walk around the streets they tell you to get on the pavement or something. If you're talking or carrying on in the town some teachers tell you to shut up and that. Its nothing to do with them. Last Saturday I was told to shut up by Mr. Whitefield in the town. It had nothing to do with him, thats just cos I was carrying on".

The idea of distance between the teacher and the boys is inextricably coupled with the boys experience of the teacher who has the power to intervene in their lives because of his ideology as a teacher who can change you and because of the power vested in him by society. Again there is no perception of the interaction as being a joint coming together of minds. There is a social distance between Them and Us and despite this They push us around. One boy explained the whole process to me step by step.

"Do you think teachers understand boys?

Edward - Well, like the way the boys act, the teachers don't understand cos some of the teachers are old, and in any case they're different from us, and we're young and we've got our own ways. They don't know what its like to be young and live on this estate.

In the questionnaire you said that you thought teachers were big-heads.

Edward - Well, some are because theythink, Ah, they're a teacher and they think they can rule you in school and tell you what to do and where to go and all that. Do many of the boys not like this?

Edward - Aye hordes of them don't because the teachers are always picking on them and that.

Are you going to stay on at all?

Edward - No I'm leaving this summer".

Thus, because they think Ah they're a teacher they think they can rule you.

This relationship to the teacher is a different one from the simple distaste and dislike expressed in the Beano or Mays work. It is a banality to say that boys dislike teachers but it is vital to understand that the boys dislike Mr. Bloggs not because he individually loses his temper but because he fulfils the role of teacher, he believes himself to be a teacher who can therefore 'rule you'. The boys would seem to say that the distance between teacher and pupil precludes any meaningful relationship and so they relate solely upon the teachers perception of his right to change them coupled with his power.

This raises the question of the legitimacy of the authority of the teacher. This sort of topic is much discussed in the sociology of education (MUSGROVE 1971) but the <sup>process</sup> ~~concept~~ of legitimacy is one that I found had no recognition <sup>by</sup> ~~of~~ the boys. Teachers pushed you around and they didn't like it. Teachers tried to rule you and they didn't like it. They tried to rule you in class and outside it in the streets, and in both places it wasn't liked. It is true that teachers are doing a job and that the boys recognise that part of that job is pushing them around. Within subcultural theory MILLER (1958) and COHEN (1955) there is a series of references to the legitimacy of certain sorts of authority, and how that authority needs to be 'neutralised' to enable the youth to withdraw legitimacy from the person's authority. With these boys though, 'authority' as a concept is not important for them in terms of control. As will be shown later, the control of teachers is through the amount of power that they wield.

Those boys that were ambivalent about teachers as a whole body being big-heads still concurred with the above interpretations since they defined the teachers that were all right as non-teacher.

"You said that you thought some teachers were big-heads. Why did you say that?

John S. - The way that they go on like. Like Mr. Jones like he talks on and then he gets you out the front and puts his walking stick round you. Just goes ah! like that (puts crook of stick round neck). He just thinks he can push you around. Some of them are big-heads but some of them are all right. Only they're not like teachers, they don't push you around".

So those individuals that don't push you around aren't REAL teachers. This could be taken for dislike by dis-paragment on the part of the boys for those individuals, until one saw the way that they have talked about REAL teachers. Rather it represents a very shrewd appraisal of what a 'teacher' is in their experience of 'schools'. The role of teacher is within the education system set up by Kay-Shuttleworth and others inextricably linked with that the idea of someone who pushes you around. Indeed if we look at the earlier section we can see that if a person was non-directive in his relationship with the boys then the Inspecotrate would withdraw recognition from him as a 'teacher'. Similarly if he does not push boys around (is 'non-directive') then the boys withdraw recognition. If they do fulfil the role of teacher then that means that they are big-headed because they DO push you around.

Therefore the boys experience of 'teachers' as a role is one of a group of people who can't really understand them but try and change them using their power in the

school situation. Dislike or hatred for teachers, calling them smelly and ugly in this situation is not an obvious childish reaction to authority but represents an experience of the situation of school similar to that encountered by the people that created the education system. Both sets of individuals defined education as changing boys ways of life - one group defined it as this favourably whilst the boys defined it unfavourably. In this light the phrase "teacher is a shit" cannot be dismissed as a simple reaction of a 'boys will be boys' nature it must be understood as a political rejection of the right of someone from a great social distance to try and change the boys life style.

#### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY OF THE BOYS

##### "THE GUERILLA AMONGST THE PEOPLE IS LIKE A FISH IN WATER"

19

If we accept that the boys experience their teachers as people trying to push them about, what do they experience as happening in the classroom and what form of action do they engage in. Again this must be prepared by the twin credo of (a) the difficulty of unravelling the links between experience and action especially in the area of the experience of sanctions and the action resulting (partly) from that experience (b) this action must be understood within the experience of compulsion of having to be at the institution.

The questionnaire asked a number of questions about classroom action. These were not simple descriptions, but more in the form of opinions about descriptions of actions, since the former needed longer expositions than the boys seemed capable of in writing. But the interviews attempted to get longer descriptions.

in fact change the mode of communication. In other words it is a naive activity - talking - carried out in such a way that it is changed by the power of sanction. Thus it is absurd to say that boys talk because it is forbidden and it is absurd to say that the fact that it is forbidden means that it has no importance. The motivation for talking in class is affected by its forbiddenness and yet this is only part of the motivation. My impression of talking in class for these boys is that most of the motivation is simply a continuation of accepted, normal, outside behaviour.

"What's carrying on in class?

Ivan - Well its just talking. As we would outside I suppose. Carrying on .... Just talking, shouting in classrooms".

Much of the other behaviour specified as preferred classroom action is similar to talking. The most obvious being eating. It at first appeared odd to me that any number of boys would reply that in class they like to eat, since I would not link the action of eating with that of classroom activity. However, as Klein (1965) has noted eating as a working class activity is much more continuous an activity than in middle class homes (The day seems one continuous meal (Klein 1965)) thus for the boys to eat is simply continuing their outside activity. Yet they know this is forbidden in the classroom. Once more the nature of forbidden is important - it is different to say that they know it is wrong - and the nature of punishment and rules in school are that they will do/<sup>x</sup>~~and~~ if they catch you eating. Therefore the question is one of surveillance for the teachers and tactics of ways of continuing their normal activity of eating. <sup>for the boys.</sup> Once more the action is affected by the power of ban but not by the idea of ban. Not that it is stopped by

Thus the question - In class I like to ....

Muck about	54
Work/Play	12
Work	23
No answer	4

once more showed that the nature of prepared classroom activity is not that of the teacher. Those boys that liked to muck about showed a wide range of preferred activity. A number simply said - Talk to my friends - or talk. This set of actions showed the boys were engaging in an activity that is at one and the same time natural and yet forbidden in this situation. To talk to ones friends is not generally something that needs explanation but in the context of the classroom it is. Given the need for silence to enable the teacher to teach and control the class the action of talking does become forbidden and disruptive. Also given the boys perceptions that talking leads to boys being hit, the fact that they like to do it in these circumstances does need interpretation. Once more it reflects upon the boys perception of the sanctions of the education system, since there is talking and talking. To carry out a simple and open conversation might lead to immediate punishment, so tactics of talking are introduced that do not bring about punishment. Thus talking continues despite the sanctions of punishment and despite the norm that boys don't talk when the teacher is. The ~~content~~ of the talking, together with its form, betrays the importance and meaning of the activity in relation to the rules and norms of the school. To talk with ones friends is a continuationn of activity that is considered all right in a situation where it is disallowed. Yet it is not the same as talking to ones friends on the way to school because the power of the institution to attempt to enforce its rule of silence does

the power of ban but merely effected by it.

Similarly with the action of shouting in class. It is a continuation of activity from the playground, the street and the home in a situation where it is forbidden.

There are sets of actions though that are much more concerned with the actual situation of school. Those boys that say they look forward to coming back to school so that they can cheek the teachers are showing a different attitude to the way in which school effects their behaviour. The teacher and the school are much more the focal point of the behaviour, it is very much effected by the classroom situation and the rules. Similarly there are some aspects of talking that are aimed at the teacher. What then is the importance of this set of actions compared to those actions that are much more a continuation <sup>of outside activity despite</sup> of the teacher. If we style one set of actions as trying to act as normal in an abnormal situation; and the other one as trying to change the abnormal situation perhaps we can elucidate the difference. Importantly though, these two sets of actions are not massively separated, rather they betray a different emphasis in different specific situations within school.

Many of the boys said that in class they liked to 'carry on', so as an entree into classroom activity I played the ignorant southerner in the interview and asked every boy what carrying on meant. It became clear very quickly that carrying on is in toto that activity in the classroom that the boys feel they initiate and have control of. It can only be contrasted with that activity initiated by teachers for their own reasons.

"Lots of boys said that they carried on in class,  
I've not heard this phrase before, what does it mean?  
Dick - It means just not bothering about what the

teacher says if he says stop doing it, then someone over the other side of the room starts. When he looks at them you start doing it again.

So .... its really just doing what you want to do in the class?

Dick - Or what the teacher doesn't want you to do."

This illustrates the impossibility of fully extricating the behaviour of an individual from the power of those in the situation. Carrying on is at one and the same time not bothering about what the teacher says and yet it also includes doing what the teacher doesn't want you to do. The only feasible link between these two is the insertion of the right of control by the boy into the situation of the classroom. Given that teachers are big-heads that try and push you around what is it that the boy can do to try and gain control in the classroom. Firstly they must not be effected by the teacher's orders and secondly they must actively carry out those things that the teacher does not allow, BOTH things being carried out within the knowledge of power and sanctions. So in terms of the model of guerilla warfare, carrying on at one and the same time represents the ability of the boys to continue their normal way of life despite the occupying army of teachers, as well as to attack the teachers on the boys own terms.

"Lots of boys .... carrying on, what does it mean?

Bert - Taking the micky out of teachers. Taking it to them. Carrying on."

The phrase "taking it to them" leaves little to the imagination and it is not doing any violence to the situation at all to style it as one of warfare in these circumstances. "Taking it to them" is a phrase of attack.

"Lots of boys .... carrying on, what does it mean?



Steven - Well you know Miss Maxwell, she's soft, so when she tells you to do something you tell her to get lost, then she sends you down to the head teacher and you get detention and lines, so carrying on is just kind of mucking the teacher about."

Tactics and strategy of attack are developed over time. There are some teachers who you attack most of the time and that you feel confident in attacking. It is an interesting glimpse of the other side of this conflict that teachers also <sup>use</sup> ~~are~~ a complex set of tactics to ward off this guerilla attack.

"Lots of boys .... carrying on, what does it mean?

Ian - Running about the classroom, underneath chairs and things like that.

What do teachers do about it?

They'll come in and probably pick on the softest boy out of the whole class sort of thing. I could tell you an instance; the other week there were some boys in class tossing chairs about. Teacher walked in and he asked one of the toughest boys what was happening and he says, I won't tell you. So he went automatically to a softer boy."

Here the teacher betrays the tactic of control that he 'automatically' puts pressure upon the weakest of his opposition in an attempt to get information. Equally the boy who says 'I won't tell you' is basing that defence upon his knowledge of the strength of the teacher.

Even when the boys see carrying on in class as a continuation of activity that they engage in outside the classroom, this does not mean that it does not constitute an attack upon the teacher, since at all times it is important to remember that the instigation of the interaction

is in the hands of the teacher and not the pupils. In other words the institution is there to change the boys, which is why they have to come. Consequently any refusal by them to even change their behaviour within the classroom - let alone in the streets or in their house - is a direct reversal of the attempted point of the institution. It is as if the guerillas were taking over the enclaves as part of their control, rather than the control of the guerillas spreading from the enclaves.

"Lots of boys..carrying on, what does it mean?

Tony - It means we do what we do outside class.

Talk, shout, eat, muck about. Just what we always do.

What do the teachers do?

Tony - They don't like it. But what can they do.

They can't rule you can they."

So the boys just 'carry on' by 'carrying on' as if the teachers weren't there. Then its up to the teachers to try and stop it, to try and change them. 'They can't rule you can they' but of course they can try.

"Lots of boys ... carrying on, what does it mean?

Jimmy - Yes you get put on report for that. If you get bored in a lesson and that and you have a bit of a carry on, flicking paper around, you get wronged for that and put on report and you get caned.

They can't rule you yet they try to stop you. Once more the attitude to sanctions and punishment becomes clear, that they can only stop you doing something by use of power and constant surveillance, which is again the problem against guerillas, with all the difficulties that this means for the teacher.

"Lots of boys..carrying on, what does it mean?

Wyn - Just have a good laugh. Have a fight with the girls you know.

What does the teacher do about this?

Wyn - Teacher doesn't know, we always do it when the teacher has turned his back to the board or something."

The problem of one against many that is the constant problem for control that rests solely on power then is once more to the fore.

How are these tactics (that allow them to challenge and even attack the power of the teacher) evolved. Obviously there is no handbook written by a schoolboy Guevara, Mao, Giap, rather it evolves over a period of time. When there are no documents and briefings it is an appallingly difficult task to work out how tactics and ideas are evolved. In the end I attempted to discover this by creating a real situation in a question in the interview. The question was unsatisfactory and the answers were not as fruitful as one had hoped, because of this, but I don't believe, given the methodological difficulties outlined in chapter 1 that there was another way of carrying this out.

I asked the boys to imagine that a new boy started in their class today. What advice would he give him about this school? This question is in theory very clever and useful but in an estate/school where new boys rarely arrive it did not have the ring of reality about it. Consequently the answers were short, but were useful in their total unanimity. Given the existence of a naive boy entering into the school situation you immediately tell him those things without which school is an impossible institution to fathom.

"Imagine a boy joined your class. What advice would you give him?

James J. - I'd tell him about the teachers that were soft and how we carry on with them. And I'd say watch out for that teacher as he is hard. Just things he had to know and let him find out the rest in his own time".

There are things he has to know like

Bert - "I just tell him to watch for some of the teachers. Like Mr. Allen who takes fits, just tell him not to say anything wrong to him or he will jump on you. He hit a lad down the stairs".

Derek M. - "Just tell him to watch out for some of the teachers, and tell him what he can get away with and what he can't".

Charlie - "Just tell him not to let teachers push him around. Those he can carry on with as he wants and those he has to watch".

Some of the teachers therefore you can carry on as you want, others are hard and you need to be careful. Importantly you needn't be pushed around because the boys have a store of knowledge about the weakness and the strength of the teachers, others enable them to combat them, despite the power that they wield. This knowledge is to be shared by the boys, every boy said that they would warn a new boy about the hard and soft teachers. Again this is a banality, everyone knows that this is what boys do in school, but why do they feel the need to do it. They could say - 'history is interesting but maths is dull'; but no, they specify these teachers that allow you to carry on in their class, that don't have the techniques of the others to stop you. Once more it can be seen that schools are about one group of people trying to change another group and the latter group resisting. This is the only way that the language and

action of the boys is intelligible.

PUNISHMENT AND SANCTIONS - When the campaign for the boys hearts and minds fails ....

The role of punishment and sanctions in the school and the boys perception of that role is obviously vital to this discussion about education. For not only is punishment and sanctions an important part of the boys experience of school, but the nature of the school as an institution is shaped by the nature of the discipline that the boys will change their behaviour for. In other words if the school fails to make them follow its rules by teaching them the rules, how then will it make them follow its rules. The boys were asked what happens when they do something wrong.

When I do something wrong my teacher

Hits me (physical violence)	32
Takes a fit (loses his temper)	19
* Employs rational discipline (extra homework)	25
Helps me to put it wight	8
No answer	9

Only 8 out of 93 boys saw their teacher as primarily assisting them to learn their lessons. The others saw a person who in a variety of different ways was there to enforce queries of rules with a set of sanctions. It is the boys perceptions of these sanctions that are under review here, though it must be remembered that rather than simply being an addendum added on to the school as a learning institution, it is rather a completely central part of the experience of school for these boys. History and geography are the periphery, the focus of the experience is the perception of rules/discipline/sanctions.

The way in which teachers are seen as enforcing their discipline falls into the three main categories outlined above. Obviously the three categories are not exclusive in that two are opposites; whether teachers are seen as acting within a rational set of disciplinary rules where sanctions are handed out in accordance with certain rule infringements; or they are seen as people who lose their tempers at the breaking of rules and use a whole variety of sanctions that are not necessarily consistently linked to the rules broken. The use of physical violence can be fitted into either of these two categories depending on the way it is used; thus being sent to the Deputy Headmaster for the cane is part of a rational set of sanctions whereas throwing rulers at the boys is more like to be 'fit of temper'. Nevertheless both out of interest, and in terms of the boys experiences of the sanctions, the category of physical violence is I think worth separating out. From outside of the situation I would say that any institution where it is felt by the participants that there is a great deal of physical violence is different from an institution devoid of such violence. Whilst the use of physical violence is usually more difficult for the middle class person to tolerate than the use of mental violence I still feel that there is some significant differences noticeable across class lines. In fact the boys themselves were indignant at the use of physical violence against them by the teachers (the important thing is that they were also indignant at the use of mental violence)

\* In using the idea of rationality or irrationality here I am talking purely of the way in which the boys perceive it. The teacher that "takes a fit" MAY be doing it because he knows that it is that and only that that creates the necessary order in the class, i.e. it is a rational decision but the boys may experience it as him throwing a fit.

because it was under the conditions of being unable to fight back. In other words it wasn't simply physical violence, but it was experienced under conditions that precluded any reply in kind; Thus there are a specific series of questions about the use of physical violence and it is used as a separate analytical and experiential category.

I would indeed contend that the total moral principle of violence as a separate category of experience is not part of working class experience. In the field of organised crime some of the people labelled as 'violent criminals' who have been convicted of committing acts of violence upon several people will be disgusted at a prison officer who pushes people around yet it is only from the outside when one imposes the category of "attitudes to violence" that this is inconsistent. If instead one situates the violence and then discusses the experience of violence in certain specific situations these "inconsistencies" are not created.

What is the nature then of the sanctions the boys receive from the teacher. Physical violence stretches from the old faithfuls (canes me - Pete) to the more to hand (gives me a crack - Fred S.) and the more exotic (chucks rulers at us - Paul) and (hits me with his walking stick - James). The losing of temper is expressed by a variety of phrases (takes a bloody fit - Dick); (tries to get funny - Michael; takes a rage - Edward) and simply (goes mad - Rupert). The rational mode of discipline is one that stretches from the mild (lectures me - John) through a whole series of sanctions (gives us extra homework - Tom; keeps me in detention - Stanley; takes me to the head of house - Peter) until finally (Will send me to the headmaster - Tim).

Whilst these three modes of sanctions represent different sets of ideas it is as important to remember that they are all sanctions enforcing a set of attempts to modify behaviour by different sorts of violence. So whilst I will analyse them separately at the close of this section I will discuss them as sanctions.

Given that over a third of the boys felt that the teacher had recourse to violence when he did something wrong. They were asked how often people were hit in their class.

Are boys hit very often in your class? How often?

Every class	12
Every day	39
Every week	32
No answer	10

What sort of things are they hit for?

Carrying on in class (cheeky, talking, carrying on)	63
Special in class (swearing, homework)	8
Passive in class (not paying attention)	8
Active outside of class (smoking, drolling)	7
Bad behaviour	5
No answer	2

Whilst the second question represents a discussion of rules rather than sanctions it is very closely linked with the use of violence. However the amount of violence perceived by the boys in the classroom is large and disparate. Since most of these boys spent a great deal of the school day together there are seeming logical contradictions in the fact that 12 boys say that someone is hit in every lesson and 32 say people are hit only once a week, (which is approximately a ratio of 30 lessons a week - so the differential perception is 1-30). There is no statistical



relationship between those who see the violence as every class and the sort of things people are hit for. The answer to the<sup>second</sup> question is even more difficult to analyse since it represents a variety of broken rules, which once more shows the lack of universals such as 'school rules'. All but 5 of the boys however specified actual rules and of these 79 only mentioned classroom behaviour as receiving physical punishment. Over two-thirds of all boys described classroom interaction that betrayed a power imbalance where people were hit for talking or talking back to the teacher. 8 boys said people were hit for not only paying attention. The overall picture is of the use of physical violence in the classroom to enforce the nature of a certain sort of classroom, interaction, i.e. where there is silence, attention of the boys and no cheeking the teacher. This also represents a perception of the use of violence in creating the necessary conditions that would allow the teachers to teach discipline - a quiet, respectful attentive collection of boys. It is interesting what violence is not used for. It isn't used to instil geography, history or science, rather it is used to instil quiet and respect.

What do the boys think about teachers that use violence?

A teacher that hits you is:

A big-head and a bully (a bastard; a twat; a puff)	62
Descriptive (Mr. X. not a good teacher etc.)	13
Right (doing his job; doing the right thing)	10
No answer	8

So fairly clearly boys resent the use of physical violence by teachers and feel some disgust at the teachers that use it. On several occasions it is referred to as unfair etc., not that they are appealing to non-violence but because the activity of physical violence on the part of the

teacher allows the boy no right of reply. If the teacher were to allow physical violence to flow both ways in the classroom then I think there would be a different attitude - indeed given the feelings of these boys there would be few teachers who would continue to use violence in the classroom.

It was interesting and fairly important to gauge the boys perceptions of the rationale behind punishment by the teachers as a whole. Quite simply, Why do you think teachers punish boys? was asked, which was asking for a description, ~~not an opinion~~

To make them obey the rules	22
So they don't do it again	35
They are bastards lose their tempers	23
No answer	13

This shows an important perception of the rationale given by teachers. In that the question was not What is punishment for? - but rather Why do teachers punish boys? In other words the answer was located in the boys perception of the teacher not in the boys perception of punishment. The question was repeated in the interview with some very important supplementaries. If they answered that it was to teach them right from wrong or to teach them not to be bad, the boys opinion of the efficacy of this was questioned. If they answered that it was the teacher losing his temper they were asked the supplementary that some teachers thought it taught the boys right from wrong - did they agree. It is very important to note that everybody interviewed said that he thought punishment did not teach them or other boys right from wrong. They may have said this in different ways and with different motives, but as far as the efficacy of punishment was

concerned they were adamant. - It did not teach boys right from wrong. Indeed most of the boys laughed scornfully at this idea when asked about it as if the idea struck them as familiar but absurd. The universality of this answer undermines one of the major models of punishment used in schools.

The spread of answers to the question about the boys perception of the teachers motives for punishment were similar to those on the questionnaire. So there were three main sets of answers -

### Discipline

"Why do you think teachers punish boys?

Ivan - It's like this. They're trying to make us see what they think is right and wrong. First they just tell us, and then they punish us to teach us it, since we don't listen much. They say its to teach us right from wrong.

Does it work?

Ivan - No. It doesn't teach us anything".

So the teachers first try and simply tell them what is right and what is wrong from their point of view and then they try and enforce this with punishment on a very simplistic Pavlovian stimulus - response model. But the boy says that it doesn't work. It doesn't work to simply tell them it and it doesn't work to hit them into it either. Similarly,

"Why do you think teachers punish boys?

Ian - I suppose its just a sort of discipline but I don't think it does any good. I mean if you look in the school book you see that the same boys get the cane all the time. It musn't be working.

Do you think the teachers think it works?

Yes, it must satisfy them. But it doesn't seem to satisfy the boys that get into trouble (laughs)".

Thus in the simple empirical investigation of looking in the book, the boys say that the teachers claim that it teaches discipline is invalidated.

#### Punishment as retribution and deterrent

"Why do you think teachers punish boys?

Dick - I couldn't say really. Some of them punish you to get you back for things they say you shouldn't be doing, dolling off and that, but if they're gonna punish you for dolling off their own lesson you'll get punished as well by the head of the house and Mr. Smith as well. *You get three beatings*"

~~You get three beatings?~~

"Some people thought that teachers punished boys to stop them doing it again. Do you think it works?

Dick - No, well it doesn't work with me. The first time I dolled off there was about five of us and two of them got caught. Well last Wednesday afternoon, one of the lads that got caught was dolling off with me again".

Therefore the idea that punishment as a retribution for past wrongs acts as a deterrent is not valid for these boys. As stressed above in the section on dolling off. The boys will obey power and sanctions only as far as they feel that that power can force them. In other words if they can do it without getting caught they will do it without regard to past experiences of punishment for the same offence.

#### Punishment as maliciousness, as lost temper,

"Why do you think teachers punish boys?

Jimmy - I don't know because they don't like them I

think some teachers just pick on me and me mates in the class for nothing.

Some boys/<sup>say</sup>that teachers punish boys to stop them from doing it again, do you think that works?

Jimmy - I don't know about that. Sometimes I am just sitting at the back of the class and I wronged for talking, and it was a boring lesson. In careers when the teachers talking he goes on for hours and we're bored and we like to talk. If you're bored I reckon its fair enough to talk and not amount of getting wrong will stop me."

Therefore given the capriciousness of a teacher that picks on you for talking when he has been boring you for hours it still doesn't teach the boys not to talk in class.

How then can we understand the models of rule enforcement that are used in the school?

The first model is the one that the early educationists wanted to bring about and I have styled the attempts to win the hearts and minds of the working class. This model is an attempt not to teach the boys a set of rules but to ensure that they learn the norms and values upon which the rules are based. Thus rather than teaching a boy to respect the teacher, you teach him that all figures of authority command ~~report~~<sup>respect</sup> - rather than teaching him to be quiet in class you teach him never to speak unless spoken to when an adult is present - rather than teaching him that you must get to school at 9 o'clock you teach him that punctuality is a virtue. In other words there is a direct attempt to create certain forms of action (and to destroy certain other forms of action) by providing the boys with a coherent set of values on which to always base their action. Thus, importantly the school was meant to be a 'civilising' agency in the

working class community as a whole; it was intended to make the working class boys action and behaviour and attitudes outside of the school those of the bourgeoisie. The measure of its failure in this ambitious task can be seen in the fact that the school itself, the agency that was used to win the hearts and minds cannot assure by the use of these values alone the 'correct' behaviour within its own walls. For if the teachers had succeeded in changing the boys' values and actions to those of his own not only would his action at home, at the youth club and eventually at work be the very model of bourgeois civilisation, but so would it also be at school. Instead the picture of the actions and attitudes of these boys towards bourgeois civilisation is one of at the least ignorance and at the most disgust. The extent of the failure to rearrange the cultural basis of action on the part of the education system will be further underlined in the section of careers, and the section on spare-time activities for in neither of these areas was there any evidence that the working class boy tried to act in accordance with the basic bourgeois values. In other words ~~it~~ would agree with a commentator in 1832 that

"It is evidently unnecessary for us to talk about enlightening the operatives, and instructing the mass of the population. We may go to sleep, so far as ~~that~~ is concerned. They will not wait for our instructions. They will instruct themselves. They are self-sufficient; and until *far better instructors appear than*

most of those who have yet manifested themselves, we cannot blame them for being so. Prophets are raised up to them 'of their own brethren' and why should they listen to the voice of the stranger? Let them teach one another". (Poetry of the Poor; London Review 199-200)

As the Times noted above the working class boys do learn from their own experience and their values that their actions are based on are derived from that experience and not from the outside culture of the education.

Given that there was no evidence in my research for the successful 'education' of these boys in terms of the complete internalisation of bourgeois values, then there is a problem of control inside the school let alone in the society as a whole. There is a second model of control which it might be claimed is used in school which is to teach a set of rules (as against the values which 'allow' the boys to create these same rules) about action in school. This model still believes that the boys can be made to change their behaviour by being taught ideas, ~~rather than concentrating exclusively upon those ideas.~~ However as one boy said (first they just tell us, and then they punish us to teach us it since we don't listen much - Ivan) the words and ideas that are expected to be communicated are not communicated, ~~as guides for the boys action.~~ Educationists and sociologists alike make the mistake of assuming a simplistic relationship between agreeing with general rules as 'right' and allowing these rules to totally govern their action. This does not represent the reality for these particular boys.

The third method of creating conformity with certain rules is one that admits the failure of the first two and is loosely based upon the ideas of *aversion therapy* (SKINNER, 1936) that if you punish a boy severely immediately after a rule has been broken he will correct the punishment with the forbidden action and that this memory will check his action. Thus once more the idea is based upon the control over action of the mind. In this case the

particular sanctions rather than the rules are the factor that stops rule-breaking behaviour. In the field of truancy it is this fear that is of importance in creating the 'having to go to school' atmosphere. It is the fear of the sanctions that the boys mentioned continually in effecting their action. ~~However it is not sufficient to say that this is the model of control of the boys action.~~ However it is not sufficient to say that this is the model of control of the boys action within the school, because given the concrete situation of the school the boys can adopt their own tactics for outmanoeuvring the broken rule → sanctions automatic link, that this model of action depends upon. Thus they evade detection and if detected attempt to change the rules. This framework of control is one that is constant operation at school but not the one upon which most of the day-to-day rules are enforced.

The fourth method, constant surveillance is the most exhausting for those enforcing control. This simply says that a rule can only be enforced in the presence of the person enforcing it. It stresses the fear of punishment not in a general sense but in the sense that one is afraid of getting caught. It puts a great deal of pressure upon methods of surveillance and is much time consuming for those in control. Rule-breaking becomes a totally creative process depending upon the power and imagination of the controlled pitted against the power and imagination of the controllers. It is this method that most of the boys I interviewed accepted as a model that controlled them and would control their friendly actions. Unfortunately for the teacher this proves the worst method for a small controlling force controlling a large group, since the controller cannot trust the controlled at all.



Thus measuring the methods of control within 'school' by the methods that 'school' was attempting to impose upon the working class, it has not succeeded. Indeed only few of the boys in my sample internalised some rules (as against the more ambitious values) and most of the school behaviour was conforming, only in so far as it could be made to be, by the powers that could be used against the boy.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE DIALECTICS OF 'DOING NOTHING'; SPARE-TIME ACTIVITIES

Introduction	209 - 212
The Concept of Leisure	212 - 214
Subterranean Values; Pop and Teenage Culture	214 - 227
Discussing Spare-time experiences	227 - 231
(1) Evangelical Institutions	231 - 242
(2) Commercial Institutions and Spare-time Activities	242 - 257
Going to Footy	
Pop Music	
Going to a dance and going to a football match as a total experience	
(3) How 'Doing nothing' when added to a 'Weird Idea' Equals 'Getting into Trouble'	257 - 286
Why not commercial institutions?	
Why not the house?	
Why in groups?	
Why do 'nothing'?	
'Weird ideas'	
'Getting into fights'	
'Getting into trouble'	
Conclusions	286 - 289
Bibliography	289 - 291

## INTRODUCTION

"The vast majority of accounts of juvenile delinquency and its underlying values agree in substance, if not interpretation, that three themes recur with startling regularity: delinquents are deeply immersed in a restless search for excitement, thrills or kicks, commonly exhibit a disdain for 'getting on' in the realms of work, and equate aggression - whether verbal or physical - with virility and toughness. In courting danger and provoking authority the delinquent is not simply enduring hazards, he is creating hazards, in a deliberate attempt to manufacture excitement. Neither does his disdain for work entail a disdain for money, on the contrary, the 'big score' is the delinquent's goal, and he sees illegal means as his only way of achieving it. Also the concept of reaching manhood via an ability to 'take it' and 'hand it out' is a familiar one to delinquents and does not necessarily involve the extremities of street gang warfare. This cluster of values, far from denoting the delinquent's apartness from the conventional world, connote his adherence ~~to~~ it".

(DOWNES, D., 1965; 78)

The intimate connections between ideas about juvenile leisure and juvenile delinquency outlined above, becomes inevitable once theories and ideas about juvenile delinquency move away from the simplistic approach which separates as a discreet entity the parts of juvenile activity that are against the law. However, once this separation has occurred in the theory of deviance the problem of understanding the context of rule-breaking activity, i.e. leisure activity, is still difficult. At one extreme it could be possible to simply view action that breaks the law as just another leisure activity that

people engage in. In other words, activity that, just by chance, the law happens to sanction. Any tendency to this approach leaves the researcher with a very naive view of society, where certain social activities are by chance banned, and where there is no awareness of rules as being significant in any way for the individuals studied.

There is no coherent theoretical or empirical attempt<sup>1</sup> to provide us with a way of thinking about rule-breaking activity as a part of wider leisure activity of young people, yet as has been said above, it is widely admitted that this is the way such activity should be viewed. This omission is made worse by the style of research and ideas into leisure activities, where explanations are made very much at the taken for granted level.<sup>2</sup> For example, in such attempts as Downes'<sup>†</sup> relate delinquent subcultures to leisure values there are passages where taken for granted explanations are used about leisure. In the sections on leisure there is very little rigorous discussion, a lack that one felt would not have been allowed to happen in any other section of the book.

1 The only consistent tradition in which rule-breaking has been viewed within a wider cultural continuum is the Chicago school. This is relevant to the argument in Chapter 2 on the sociology of culture where it was argued that nearly all studies of cultural behaviour were not carried out within the values of the whole of that culture. Thus, rules from the outside of a culture have been used to make sense of action within a culture in which the rules must not always be felt to apply. Thus whole areas of action have been removed from their milieu.

2 With the recent exception of I TAYLOR (1971) there has been little British sociology that has taken sport seriously as a subject of study.

"The call for 'exploit' arises most forcefully in leisure, and in this central respect, 'teenage' culture reflects the achievement orientation of contemporary adult leisure culture, e.g. the decline of craftsmanship in work which has led to the popularisation of do-it-yourself." (my emphasis) (DOWNES, D. 1965; 133)

The 'achievement orientation' which is argued as central to concept of exploit is the exemplified rise of do-it-yourself which seems to be caused by declining craftsmanship during 7.30 - 4.30 at work. Simplistically it seems to assume the need for the individual to achieve a certain amount of craftsmanship and if he can't achieve it at work then he will strive to achieve it during his leisure activities. Despite this underlying belief there are other faults in the argument, not the least of which is the dubious nature of the <sup>casual</sup> factor the "decline of craftsmanship in work". Whilst it is difficult to prove any such thing with statistics, it seems likely that there is now more craftsmanship for more people at work than at any time since the advent of the factory system of production. It may be true that in pre-capitalist production there was more craftsmanship, but in the time period that is presumably referred to here (at the most a post World War II time span) i.e. that period where the rise of do-it-yourself has been important, it seems likely that 'craftsmanship' has increased at work but what seems much more likely is that the do-it-yourself popularisation is a result of other factors such as the increase in owner occupation amongst the lower-middle class and the skilled working class. I would be surprised if it was found that much of the new do-it-<sup>3</sup>yourself was carried out by the unskilled working class,

3 As against the traditional money-saving forms of do-it-yourself such as home-cobbling

who are those people suffering from a lack of craftsmanship. Yet this represents an important part of Downes' arguments on leisure since he infers from this that the decreasing enjoyment of craftsmanship at work (and presumably one could argue at school) leads to an increase in the importance of leisure activities. It is this increase in the importance of leisure activities that is of vital importance to Downes major ideas of blocked leisure opportunities discussed later in the chapter. Thus in the field of leisure as in other areas studied there is a tendency to assume a common importance of certain values or factors.

#### THE CONCEPT OF LEISURE

It seems equally important to show at once the limitations of the use of the concept of leisure in this context, as it has been to show the limitations of the concept of 'delinquency' in the discussions about theories of delinquency. It has been shown<sup>4</sup> that the concept of delinquency contains within it very strict cultural limitations that in crucial areas (notably those of the meaning of the action to the actor) could well cloud our understanding rather than provide us with insights. The same has proved to be true with the concept of leisure in this study, for whilst I would not necessarily hold that all the concepts that we use should be intelligible to the objects of each study, I would argue that they must have some very direct relevance to the actor's experience of the situation. In this case any concept of 'leisure activities' that strays from the very general - all activities that are not 'work' (a concept itself obviously problematic) - seems to act as a culturally exclusive definition.

4 BECKER, H. (1963 & 1964)

To explain this we need only refer to activities of a non-work nature in two different cultural milieus. For example, the action of eating a meal between the hours of 4 in the afternoon and going to bed. For one section of the population this may well be a leisure activity, under the auspices of going out to dinner or giving a dinner party. For another section the meal eaten at this time would be merely the action of eating and would not count as a leisure activity. Similarly the act of watching the television may be so much part of life for some people as not to count as leisure activity.

Such discussions may seem overly pedantic, but I would suggest that the use of 'spare-timeactivity' as against leisure activity is one that fits more aptly to the cultural milieu of this study. Given the use of the all inclusive spare-time activity as the organising locus of this part of the study, it would be obviously in bad faith if I was to exclude delinquent activities from this part of the study. However, it is too simplistic to argue that there is no discrete significance in the actor's definitions about rule-breaking behaviour. As a consequence, some specific categorisation along these lines will be made, and spelt out later. What is important though is to stress the continuities between the two areas in terms of time and meaning. Time, in that the spare-time delinquent activities do tend to arise out of the non-delinquent spare-time activity and meaning in that the most meaningful experiential division for the youths is that between school and non-school activity. Thus the delinquent acts discussed in this section will not include deviancy inside the school as that appears not to correspond with the experience of the boys. For them there is no section of their lives marked 'deviant activities' which include truancy, cheeking teacher, cheeking Dad and

stealing apples.

### SUBTERRANEAN VALUES; POP AND TEENAGE CULTURE

The three major strands of sociological theories about leisure activities of working class youth all have their similarities with the theories discussed in other sections. Yet nevertheless each represents a specialised importance in this area. The three strands to be discussed are the subterranean values of spare-time activity; the blocked opportunity of access to the leisure goals and the importance of 'teenage' and 'pop' culture.

The line of theoretical thinking that led to Sykes and Matza's<sup>6</sup> theory of subterranean values has been referred to elsewhere.<sup>7</sup> Whilst it has been seen primarily as a theory explaining delinquent activity it could be even more fruitfully seen as discussing the whole spectrum of adolescent leisure which includes within it, the delinquent activities. At an extreme it does explain why society, both on a macro and micro level, views all adolescent leisure activities in the way that it does.

It will be remembered that Sykes and Matza suggest that there is a fundamental contradiction running through the value system of ALL members of society. Co-existing alongside the overt or official values of society are a series of subterranean values. One of these, and indeed the crucial one for a discussion of the substantive area of working class adolescent leisure, is the search for excitement or kicks. Society, they argue, tends to provide institutionalised periods in which these subterranean values

6 MATZA, D. & SYKES, G. (1963): MATZA, D. (1964)

7 Chapters 1 and 2



are allowed to emerge and take precedence, for periods of time they become the overt values of society rather than subterranean. It is in the world of leisure that these subterranean values become overt, in holidays, festivals and sports where the formal rules of working are not stressed. In their own words:-

"The search for adventure, excitement and thrill is a subterranean value that often exists side by side with the values of security, routinization and the rest. It is not a deviant value, in any full sense, but must be held in abeyance until the proper moment and circumstances for its expression arrive."

(MATZA & SYKES, 1963; 716)

In this light, as has been said, the juvenile delinquent is seen not as an alien body within society, but representing a disturbing reflection and caricature. The delinquent takes up the subterranean values of society: hedonism, disdain for work, aggressive and violent notions of masculinity and accentuated them to the exclusion of formal or official values. The same could be said of the leisure activities as a whole of the young working class boy. Musgrove (1964) corroborates this point by his survey of attitudes of adults to teenagers. He claims that adults prefer them to 'have a good time while they've got the chance' but they simultaneously condemn them for their hedonism and irresponsibility. This can be seen as precisely an attempt to act out the subterranean values of society immediately coming into contact with the overt values, since the subterranean values were being expressed at the wrong time.

Criticisms of this approach have been more fully outlined already above (i.e. an implicit functionalist approach of society, why do these subterranean values exist?

where do they come from? is it fruitful to use the bifurcation into overt and subterranean? does this bifurcation clarify or cloud the seeming contradictions of cultural values?). In the case of leisure Jock Young (1971) has shown the parallels between the subterranean values and the values of 'play' as outlined by Giddens (19 ) and Huizinga(1969) which results in the following argument.

"Children from the age of about five are socialised by school and family to embrace the work ethic. For the young child play is possible, for the adolescent it is viewed ambivalently, but for the adult play metamorphoses into leisure. This process of socialisation engenders in the adult a feeling of guilt concerning the uninhibited expression of subterranean values. He is unable to let himself go fully, release himself from the bondage of the performance ethic and enter unambivalently into the world of play."

(YOUNG, J., 1971; 133)

This, of course, takes on a Freudian model and joins it with the overt/subterranean bifurcation. This dichotomy becomes seen as a repression of what is implicitly an instinct for 'play' in the young. The factory system of production apparently needs to repress this instinct to enable the individual to work efficiently.

This model is explicitly therefore a model that explains 'play' in this society by means of faulty socialisation. The gradual age-graded movement from total play as a baby to totally socialised ambivalence at working age is one that overtly puts the working class adolescent at the crucial stage of lack of socialisation - he fails to repress fully his instincts for play.

There is, however, an alternative to this model which enables us to remove the conception of faulty socialisation and also fits in with the overall theory of cultural values of the thesis. Socialisation, by itself, and typified by a process of value-change over time, is not in itself the major process by which 'the repression to play' diminishes over the life-span. The process of value-change is only one aspect of the changing material conditions of a working class adolescent and his experience of those conditions. For it is the working class experiences of these conditions that has led to the 'solutions' accrued over time and known as working class culture. If we use both a total societal model of values as Sykes and Matza (1964) and apparently Young (1971) do, and if we also use a simplistic bifurcation model, then much of the activities of working class youth becomes unintelligible or at least explicable only through 'faulty socialisation models of man'. If, however, we base our understanding of spare-time activities upon not only the socialisation process (as exemplified by the school) that represents an attempt to impose a system of values typified by delayed gratification, but also upon the whole spectrum of cultural alternatives that have arisen from the experience of working class life as well as the more recent cultural solutions provided by 'teenage' and 'pop' culture, we have a much more complex picture of the same data. Indeed I will argue that it is one that fits the experience of the spare-time of adolescents (and for that matter their parents).

Once one is committed to the Sykes and Matza bifurcation (even if one ignores the theoretical disagreements), there are some very great difficulties in talking about class differences in activities. As Downes has pointed out

one is left saying that working class youth is badly socialised as they do not recognise the time and the place for the proper use of subterranean values.

However, Sykes and Matza do provide us with a model that represents the different values held by members of society about how best to spend one's time. Their discussions of ambivalence and contradiction towards the dominant work ethic is most useful in general but in the case of adolescent spare-time activity as shown by the data from this study there would appear to be very little sign of adherence to the overt values of the work ethic except in one or two cases that will be discussed below.

Another useful aspect of this theory is the insights it provides into the societal reactions to the leisure activities of the young. Jock Young writes that "it is not psychotropic drugs per se that evoke condemnation but their use for unreservedly hedonistic and expressive ends. Society reacts then, not to the use of drugs, but to the type of people who use them, it reacts against the subterranean values of hippies and the use of drugs to attain these goals." (YOUNG, J., 1971; 149) The argument is that because each policeman, social worker, judge and J.P. has certain aspects of these subterranean values in their lives AND because these values are both repressed and enjoyable, it explains the vicious reaction of the social control forces, both in terms of individual motivation and on a macro-societal level. (Where would we be if everybody was blown out of their minds and the Russians attacked?) The same can be said of the leisure activities of the young as a whole and the societal reaction to them. (For example: just look at them scrapping. It's disgusting all this fighting, no self-control! What would happen if I went in

to the foreman and said to him what you said to your teacher?) - all examples of the acting out of values that the individuals themselves might like to do.

However, the same argument applies as to the remainder of the theory's applications. Its strength is in explaining the cultural ambivalence of members of certain groups, in showing that there are aspects of the value system that derive from outside that group. But its weakness is in its trans-societal use of analogy. (Just how useful is it to think of the working class youth as a leisure class? What are the justifications for likening the Saturnalia of pre-Celtic Britain with the acting out of the value of kicks in modern society? To what extent is a judge really threatened by a hippy smoking pot? Is it meaningful to say that the judges' methods of getting excitement (cheating at bridge) is analogous to smoking pot?) There seems to be no need to think of this cultural ambivalence in terms of a simple bifurcation that runs through every member of society.

The idea of blocked aspirations will be fully discussed elsewhere but in the field of leisure Downes reintroduces this idea as one of major importance to his interpretation of the spare-time activities of working class youth. There are two strands of the argument that lead in the final analysis to the idea of 'double deprivation which in turn leads to double status frustration.' In the first place it is argued that the working class youth is blocked in access to both his educational and occupational aspirations which is a source of frustration that reverberates through his whole life experience. His inability to gain satisfaction in his school or work roles lead him to place an even greater stress upon the importance of his leisure aspirations

the attainment of which provides him with the only hope of gaining status and satisfaction (as has been stated elsewhere <sup>10</sup> it is always difficult to decide whether it is the attainment of self-respect at gaining achievements that is important). However, at the same time the working class youth is equally open, as other youths are, to the pressures of teenage culture. This culture provides him with "leisure aspirations that are not only high in relation to his socio-economic position (since) they are identical with those pursued by upper and middle class adolescents" <sup>11</sup>. Put crudely this means that the average boy from Stepney and Sunderland is under pressures to aspire to the values aspired to by the people in the Kings Road. If this were the case then indeed the working class youth would have great difficulty in managing the yawning gap between aspirations and achievement. Both pressures together prove a very great problem of adjustment to the working class youth.

"There is some reason to suppose, however, that the working class 'corner boy' both lays greater stress on its leisure goals, and has far less legitimate access to them, than male adolescents differentially placed in the social structure. This discrepancy is thought to be enough to provide immediate impetus to a great deal of group delinquency, limited in ferocity, but diversified in content." (DOWNES, D., 1963; 250)

Thus the theory of blocked leisure opportunity depends upon the two ideas of the transference of importance from work/education aspirations to those of leisure, coupled

10 See discussions of A.K. Cohen (1955) in Chapter 2

11 DOWNES, 1965; 133-34

with society's stress upon the leisure goals of teenage culture which leads to the fact that 'for the working class boy the success goals of Merton's paradigm are leisure goals, and in a situation where he is baulked of legitimate access to them, he is confronted with the choice of boredom, with the need to manufacture his own exploit.'

This argument, like Matza and Sykes subterranean values theory, contains much that fits in with the data and the interpretation of this study, notably the importance of time outside of the school and the importance of the creation of exploits by the youths. However, the belief in the first place that it is the realisation of the impossibility of attaining the aspirations in education and work that leads to the stress in leisure is not backed up at all. Indeed as has been stated several times elsewhere I would call into question the idea that these aspirations ever even enter the lives of these youths in any important way. Instead their cultural aspirations are MUCH closer tied with their experiences of life.

What, how ever, is consistent with the thesis of the study is the overall cultural importance of non-work activity, and non-school activity; (as it has represented) those areas of life where the working class have had any element of control. This is true for all youth as it is for all at work, since the compulsory nature of school removes it as an experience from those areas of life where any real choice is possible; thereby putting emphasis upon the other activities and separating them from school. This can be shown to stem both from the culture of the working class with its importance in areas of enjoyment on non-work activity and from the experience of the youth in the schools at the moment. It is not that they find it impossible to

attain the aspirations of school and work and that this makes leisure important, it is more that these aspirations have never become part of their life-experience and therefore the structure of the institutions that stress their importance is seen as irrelevant or important only because of its compulsory nature.

While it is valid to argue that important aspects of life ARE to be found outside the structure of the school in activities entered into with friends in a freer atmosphere that at school, this has little to do with frustrations and blocked aspirations and more to do with the factor that the formal structure of school had never been viewed as a place where satisfaction could be achieved. Thus one does find a differential importance for middle class kids at school because there is some satisfaction to be achieved; not necessarily agreeing with all the rigours of school life, but getting some sort of satisfaction in achieving examination passes etc.

The frustration engendered by an inability to meet the aspirations of teenage culture is another aspiration argument that this thesis cannot support. I would argue that it is untrue that the aspirations of teenage culture are held to the same extent by all sections of the population within that age group. The communication of these cultural goals cannot be viewed as a simple blanket process but as a very complex interaction which includes at least two crucial factors: the amount of exposure to the symbols of teenage culture, (a 14 year old with some money to spend in London is likely to find himself exposed to much more of the teenage culture than his counterpart in Sunderland) but more importantly the symbols of teenage culture are communicated to youth only in terms of what



those youths themselves make of those symbols. As Mead has said, the process of communication is a complex and a creative one<sup>12</sup> from both ends and any understanding of the effect of the aspirations of teenage culture MUST be viewed in this light. The 14 year old working class youth in Sunderland gets a very different "message" from teenage culture than do his age counterparts in other areas and classes. In other words it is incorrect and simplistic to view teenage culture as a blanket that covers all members of that age cohort in the same thickness. For some the blanket is very threadbare and has very little noticeable effect, for most its effect is seriously changed by the way in which it is interpreted by the individual. Thus we cannot talk in terms of common aspirations of teenage or pop culture across society.

This brings me to the discussion of teenage and pop culture itself. It is here that it is important to stress the argument of the totally different meaning of 'teenage' or 'pop' culture to different parts of the age group. There are two different ways in which this differential response can be explained. In the first place Downes argues that 'Teenage culture is largely synthetic culture, it is created for, not by, teenagers.' (DOWNES, D., 1965; 129) This being the case then teenage culture is created specifically for an economic market, i.e. working class males between 15 and 25 and it is these males, i.e. those with time and money that represented the 'market' that was turned into a culture. Thus it was this group that teenage culture was created around and to be outside of that group in class, age or sex terms was to be affected by a synthetic culture that was not specifically meant for you.

Thus the 17 year old grammar school boy was affected by teenage culture but in a different way from his age counterpart in an unskilled factory job.

However, in 1971 I would suggest that the modal person around which teenage culture is created is no longer represented by the working class youth aged between 15 and 25. Since 1963-4 when Downes was carrying out his research, teenage culture has changed much, both in terms of its created and its non-synthetic creative aspects, i.e. from the point of view of the record and clothes manufacturers and from the point of view of the teenager who was never a totally manipulated recipient in any case. To trace this change would take a lengthy discussion of the change in capitalist society in that period, perhaps it will suffice to use similar criterion to Downes by tracing those groups that the market consists of, as well as the content of the music that exemplifies this culture.

The group of greatest importance to emerge over this period has been the student. Over the eight years from 1963-1971 numbers have increased by eight or nine times and whilst the N.U.S. correctly put their analysis of the grant position as being only about that of the spending power of 1962, it is still true that for the record manufacturers there is a total volume of spending power that is ten times greater than eight years ago. This, coupled with a ~~similar~~ increase in students across the Atlantic, has had a very great effect upon the content of teenage culture. A whole series of important parts of that culture would be unimaginable without the effect of the student image. The effects of the hippie movement on mainstream teenage culture; the change in the style of lyrics in parts of the culture; a different ambience in the wearing of

clothes; the initial freedom to grow hair long away from teachers, foremen AND parents; the maintenance throughout of a growing part of music named 'progressive'.

Because of the different class basis of the student population, the links between teenage culture and its music, and working class culture are now by no means as strong as Downes could outline them in 1965.<sup>13</sup> The other changes have also been in terms of a widening of the market. Songs specifically for the Mums and Dads on one level; clothes for the older members of the teenage culture; clothes for the 10-15 year old in the same style as his older counterpart; the arrival of a significant indigenous West Indian market that has brought with it its own demands for certain forms of music and clothes.

Most importantly, however, the growth of the teenage culture market has meant that the people that provide that market have grown in number until they form a culture themselves. In the early 60s it could well have been the hatchet-faced middle-aged businessman from E.M.I. that created the images that teenagers lived through. But in 1971 he is much more likely to be someone in his early 20s with long hair and who has grown up with a relationship to an already existing teenage culture, which is something his counterpart ten years previously had not experienced.

This is important because these creators of culture make the mistake that the E.M.I. business-man never could, that is that they are representatives of that culture as well as its creators. Thus they create the culture in their own image and we have a totally parasitic community of

people growing up at vast distance from the 'average' teenager, who start to assume that they are the average teenager. Thus there is now a strand of teenage culture that is based totally upon the Kings Road scene and in some cases has become to be seen as the teenage culture. This idea is maintained by a constant reference to certain styles of life that are far beyond the capabilities of most teenagers, both financially and existentially; these styles of life are no longer the styles of "life of the 'stars'" but are presented as teenage culture itself.

The end result of these changes, both within the area of the market and the size of the market is to create a teenage culture of a much more diversified nature than Downes' could point to in the early 60s. It is now much more difficult and less meaningful to try and observe 'focal concerns' as Downes did, since the focal concerns of one section of the culture are different from another.

However, I would argue that in any case the representatives from such a culture are not received by different sections of the population in the same way. In short I would challenge the concept of a meaningful synthetic culture and suggest that teenage culture as a set of values that effect action (rather than an image or a totality in an advertiser's mind) is a process of interaction between a created set of values and the existing cultural milieu of the individual who is receiving that culture. Thus some of it that may contain no meaning in the life experience or problems of the individual and will have little or no effect upon his actions, most of any 'created culture' will have some relevance to those who it is created for, but the meaning of it will by no means be the same for different cultural milieus. It will certainly not be isomorphic with

the meaning given to that culture by its creators or by an outside researcher. Thus it is of little use entering into the research situation with a series of concepts that represent 'teenage culture' as these representations are the result of one's own cultural milieu.

Recent research<sup>14</sup> has backed up this point by reporting that 'rather than creating a classless society for the young, pop is reaffirming class divisions'. It would seem that the concept of a unifying pop culture is now no longer linked with the reality of pop music.

#### DISCUSSING SPARE-TIME EXPERIENCE

Most of the preceeding theoretical and methodological criticisms have been about the two major paradigms that sociology has used to organise the spare-time experience of working class boys. The arguments against the legal/non-legal leisure/non-leisure dichotomies have been sufficiently compelling to rule out their use in this study. Therefore, I have had to create other methods of organising the writing about the boys experiences in order to keep as close as possible to the experience of the boys. It may be possible for instance to merely cope with the problem in terms of a chronology of events for the boys. In this way the activities would be organised in a similar way to the actual experience of the boys concerned. Sunday morning playing football would follow Saturday evening say, in the streets which included an interval at the club but ended up with Match of the Day at a mate's house. The advantages of a chronological/experiential categorisation are many, not only in assisting an interpretative mode of sociology; but also in organising data in a distinctive intelligible way. This second point is important since most systems of

categorisation are very rarely spelt out in research with the consequence that data that have been organised becomes seen as unorganised raw data and the method of organisation remains hidden.

However, there are many difficulties inherent in the chronological organisation of data not the least of which is the tremendous amount of space needed to report the wealth of detail included in a study of all the activities outside of school and work. Another difficulty is that there are some activities that are more important than others for any individual. It only needs a moments self-reflexivity to see the obvious validity of this in anyone's life. The amount of time spent waiting in any urban environment for transport, in queues, the adverts on television, is experienced as time between activities that are experienced as important. If I were to only deal though with the apparent highlights of spare-time activities, I would miss one of the major forms of activity, namely 'doing nothing'. Thus we are left with a series of activities and actions, on all of which individuals spend a great deal of time; some of which are more significant to them than others. Here is an example of these sets of activities from an interview in my own research;

"Would you tell me the sort of thing you do on an average Saturday evening?

Peter - Usually play football down the streets. Play footy. Just gang down the Court or somewhere then gang home.

What sort of things do you do?

Peter - Well on Sunday I knock around with me mates. What do you do?

Peter - Well cause trouble, you know. Play knocking on doors. Throw stones at windows and that. Cause

fight's mostly.

Who do you fight with?

Peter - Other groups just walking round the streets like us.

Do police ever oome?

Peter - No.

Do people come out of houses and complain?

Peter - No."

This boy recognises the existence of the category 'trouble' as part of the activity of action on the streets. He is NOT however, interfered with by the police as law-keepers or the community as rule-keepers. It is difficult to categorise this activity purely as rule-breaking, since it seems to be experienced in a very different way; as part of the action of being on the streets. Yet at the same time the feeling of trouble is important to the boy, it is significant over and above the simple activity of eating his tea, which is of course "another sort of thing he does".

The resulting organisation of data that I have used by no means surmounts all these difficulties, it does however have the merit of being explicit in its method and as close to the boys experience as possible. I have organised the boys spare-time activity into three major groups along the continuum of peer-group control over the activity as experienced by the boys. If I use the example of going to a youth club, I can show the different nature of this as an experience for different boys along this continuum. 72 of the boys said that they liked going to a youth club, and given the sample, this would look like a tremendous boost to the popularity of youth clubs. Yet this activity was NOT a uniformly experienced one. Some boys went to the club to play badminton, table tennis etc. under supervision;

some boys saw it as an opportunity to play footy inside the youth club under their own rules etc.; some boys saw it as an opportunity to hang about near the doors of the club and may be cause trouble and disrupt the others activities. These sets of actions are all contained within an answer "I like it", to a question "Do you like going to a youth club"? Yet not only does this represent a different set of experiences but it also brings about a different social policy. If "Going to a youth club" for all the boys meant playing badminton under supervision then youth clubs might function very differently from the way they do if it means 'causing trouble'.

Therefore rather than accept overall simplistic categories like "Going to a youth club" I have split these experiences into the following three categories of experience. The first two categories include activities taking place within adult organised institutions of one sort or another. However, the boys experiences of these institutions are importantly different and the institutions themselves are trying to do different things for and with the boys.

- (1) Adult organised activities within 'Evangelical institutions', e.g. scouts, playing badminton in a youth club; playing football for the school.
- (2) Activities taking place in commercial institutions or under some adult supervision, e.g. going to football; going to a pop concert; playing football for a local team.
- (3) Peer-group organised activity, e.g. hanging about; kicking a ball around in the street; sitting in a cafe; causing trouble.

In these categories it is obvious that certain



activities that would normally be included under one heading are, in fact mentioned in different ways. Most obviously football. To understand the significance of football to working class youth, the game must be understood in many different ways; as a spectacle, as an organised game with a certain amount of rules to be kept to, as a game where boys have individual skills to test out, as an all-pervasive physical activity that will be played as often as possible by the boys and in many different settings, as an important aspect of local and regional affiliation, in many different ways. In any understanding of football it is important to group these different experiences together and use the idea of the game itself as the organising locus, however in any understanding of youths experience of their spare-time activities the categories must be justified in terms of their experience and not necessarily within the unity of the game of football.

#### (1) EVANGELICAL INSTITUTION

The amount of involvement by these boys in activities which are adult regulated is quite small. For J.B. Mays has styled such activities as the Youth Service as "like the white corpuscles of the blood stream, attacking infection and minimising the source of danger to the body as a whole", (MAYS; 1954; 126) and as far as the vast majority of these boys are concerned the white corpuscles are of no real importance whatsoever.

It is not easy to provide a negative analysis of 'lack of involvement' as for the most part the research has been about the youths' 'reality' rather than the reality he rejects, however it is important to attempt to draw the parallels between school and these activities in the eyes

of the youths.

Like school itself and the education system as a whole, the Duke of Edinburgh award, the scouts, the Youth Service and school-based leisure activities (like playing for the school football team) would all describe their system of organisation as non-authoritarian. They would describe their aims in words and concepts that were in some way 'client-centred', that is based primarily upon the individual child. None of these organisations would describe themselves as either 'authoritarian' or based upon anything but trying to build up the character of the children. This self-image is important because it accentuates the gap in perception between the individuals that run these past-times and the perception of the youths that they are aiming for. An example of this is the Duke of Edinburgh award run in Municipal school. This is a scheme that is supposed to have a large degree of 'choice' in its content; that gets individual boys away from their environment; that is in short created to attract fairly tough individuals who 'want a challenge'. However, the teacher in charge of this activity in this school was the one teacher that was universally disliked by all the boys interviewed as someone who "took fits" and hit people with stools. No to the people in charge of this scheme it may have appeared somewhat strange that none of the boys that 'could have gained' from this activity ever took part, yet it is significant that any single boy could have told them that the master in charge was disliked and feared. This is not to say that if another master had been put in charge, that all the boys would have flocked to gain their bronze awards, but it shows the gap between the controllers of the activities and the boys; a gap sufficiently big to stop any boy from conceiving of taking part.

The whole question of the boys participation in youth clubs will be discussed at length later on where it will be shown that, going to a youth club can mean something very different for most of the boys than one might expect.

Running through the boys spare-time activities is the game of football. Half the boys said that they played football every day, and only seven never play at all. We are told by the Football Association and most football commentators that the game of football is the same, from kicking a ball around in the back streets of Barnsley to the lush green turf of Wembley. I will attempt to show that experientially it is impossible to draw that conclusion. TAYLOR (1971) has shown the changes in the game as a spectator sport over time, I will discuss the differences in the game as a participator also. In both these cases the MODE of organisation will be stressed as important. In this section I will discuss the most organised form of football, playing for the school.

In this case it is most obviously a different form of game. As Hargreaves has pointed out the disassociation from school sports is important.

"On the question of sport most of the teachers believed that it was the boys with superior academic performance who made the best sportsmen. Whilst it is true that there tends to be a low positive correlation between intelligence and skill at games, the disproportionate representation of high stream boys in sporting activities takes no account of the fact that low stream norms reduce motivation both to achieve academically and to participate in extra-curricula activities, especially when these are associated with loyalty to the school.

This point may be illustrated. One one occasion during an informal discussion with Derek of 4D I learned that he was going to the swimming baths after school. I also discovered that such visits were a regular event for Derek and some of his friends, and that they were fairly able swimmers. When I asked Derek for which events he would enter in the School Swimming Gala, he retorted:

I wouldn't swim for the bloody school".

(HARGREAVES, D., 1967; 188)

In this way Hargreaves attempts to get away from the simplistic one-dimensional notion of school sports, that is that the boys who are best at them get into the team. He introduces another form of motivation as well as skill and that is loyalty to the school or rather deliberate disloyalty. I think this still an insufficient analysis of 'playing sport'. For Derek for instance 'not swimming for the bloody school' may not simply be about the disloyalty to the school but a dislike for the mode of swimming that swimming for the school engenders. Hargreaves tells us he is a 'fairly able swimmer' but what does he mean by this? that he can swim a certain distance in a certain time? that he has a beautiful style? Whatever it is he fails to elucidate that the experience of 'going swimming' is of a totally different type for Derek than 'swimming for the school'. The latter is a highly structured experience where you have to turn up at a certain time, you have to swim at a certain time, you have to swim in a certain style, in a certain lane, and equally important you have to stop at a certain time. The enterprise is massively structured in every entirety, you have to swim even if you'd rather not. This is compared with going down the pool and having a few ~~school~~ races with your mates, dive-bombing each other

and generally having fun, but deciding when and how to do it according to how you feel. I would suggest that the difference between these two activities is massive and a greater constraint than the 'norm' of 4D that says that certain activities are disloyal to the norms of 4D. If anyone were to suggest that the school gala were to consist of all the kids in the school swimming about as they felt like it then he would be immediately thought to be totally misunderstanding the nature of the school gala, and of course he would be. For school sports are not simply meant to allow the boys a chance to enjoy themselves, they are meant to instil a certain attitude to sports as their prime reason for being in the timetable and in extra-curricula activities. Playing football for the school constitutes a certain form of playing football, which by no means represents the 'normal' way of playing football for the boys in the study. They are only linked by the kicking of the ball, indeed they are given different names, playing football and 'footy' respectively.

Two boys had specifically given up football for the school even though they enjoyed the game because they couldn't maintain their enthusiasm for the activity despite the imposed structure.

"Do you like football?

Bert - Yes a lot. I used to play for the school team only you had to turn out every Saturday and you had to buy a bag so I dropped out.

Where do you play football round here?

Bert - Used to play outside the metalwork shop. But the coppers came and said next time we catch you you're gonna get summoned; he took the ball away in his panda".

This illustrates the different nature of the games.

As far as the Football Association is concerned the hazards of football are only an injury or two, or perhaps at the most cramp from the exertion, for the boys it varies from having to get a bag to dodging the police.

"Do you play football?

Steven - Yes, its great. I played for the school team but they wanted you out every Saturday whatever the weather. Playing in rain and cold and snow. Its no fun playing that way. So I dropped out".

Both of these boys did not like to turn out every Saturday to play football for the school. The structured organised way of playing the game was not at all their idea of the game - having to buy a bag and the obvious absurdity of playing football can be seen as a lack of enthusiasm for the game. Yet both these boys expressed great enthusiasm for footy. It is just that (succinctly put) playing football for the school is not their game.

To underline the importance of the way in which the different structure of the game effects different boys, there were two boys who enjoyed playing football for the school, who felt that football was about individual skills.

Two boys, Fred S. and Billy expressed continual dislike for school and indeed said that they came to school because they liked playing football for the school. These

15 "Why don't you like coming back to school at the beginning of term?

Billy - Because I hate school and I wish the fucker wasn't invented".

Billy - Teachers at this school are ...a load of bastards

Billy - What I like about school is ... fuck all

Billy - Teachers think I am ... thick

Fred S. - Teachers at this school are .. a load of shit

Fred S. - Teachers think I am ... a hooligan

boys would be completely opposite to Hargreaves 'Derek' who based his opposition to school sports upon his opposition to school as a whole. If therefore we reject Hargreaves interpretation, how do these boys experience playing for the school. In the interview both boys were asked about football.

"Do you play football?

32 Yes. I play for the school - I'm good at it and enjoy playing against good opposition".

"Do you play football?

40 Aye. Every chance I can get. For the school too. Nothing like a really good game with all the gear. I'm fast on the wing you know".

Both lads play the sort of football that is more enjoyable in a highly organised, eleven a side, 45 minute each half, sort of game. They enjoy exercising their individual skill at the game and as George Best would testify the expression of individual skill is easier in a structured game with well defined rules and a referee. So their type of football is highly structured variety.

However, there are teams outside the school that boys can play for, but generally these teams are for older boys that have left school. Under these circumstances 14 year olds have to be very good to be able to play. Only one of the boys had the required skills within the structured organised game of football but one boy (Robert) who talked about his father and him always doing things together (pop music, football, army cadets - see Chapter 5) said that he didn't like playing but enjoyed being a referee or a linesman.

16 I come to school because ... I like to play football for the school - Billy and Fred S.

Robert -

"Well its just that I certainly understand the game a bit more when I'm refereeing. Up till now I have run on the line for a couple of clubs like Redhouse Mens Club. I've run on the line for them about four times. I think its a bit more exciting on the line cos you can understand the game a bit more and you can decide decisions".

For this boy football is a set of rules and a game to understand, and this picture fits much more with the common sense view of football.

Thus I have attempted to show that there are many types of games of football within the one label. That for most of the boys the activity of playing football was not that of the structured game with eleven a side etc. and that this type of game does in fact deliberately put some boys off of playing. Only those individuals who experienced football as a chance to use their individual skills or to exercise their knowledge of the rules really felt that a structured game of football was very enjoyable. However, this particular game of 'football' is very much a minority experience amongst these boys. The majority experience will be outlined later.

The advent of pop music has changed the ways in which adults view young people's music, and now there is at least recognition if not tolerance of a fairly wide range of sorts of music. This change has effected teachers too. Nevertheless all schools have some kind of orchestra which represents the school at functions and this orchestra has to reflect a more traditional form of music. Consequently pressure is applied on pupils in most schools to join school orchestras and choirs and few schools organise their own pop groups. In the North East however the traditional



school orchestra is not one that necessarily includes strings, but is rather based upon the brass band. Other evangelical institutions that the boys come into contact with also organise their music on the basis of orchestras or bands, e.g. Salvation Army, Boys Brigade. The same is true of choirs either in schools or in church. Thus any activity in the field of music must be in an adult organised institution of a non-pop variety. The only cases where boys took an active part in this type of music were two boys who played instruments.

"Do you like pop music?

Frank - A bit but I play in the school orchestra you know and I'm in a local orchestra, the Sunderland Youth Orchestra. I take a good interest in that it's held on Friday nights".

"What do you do with your spare time?

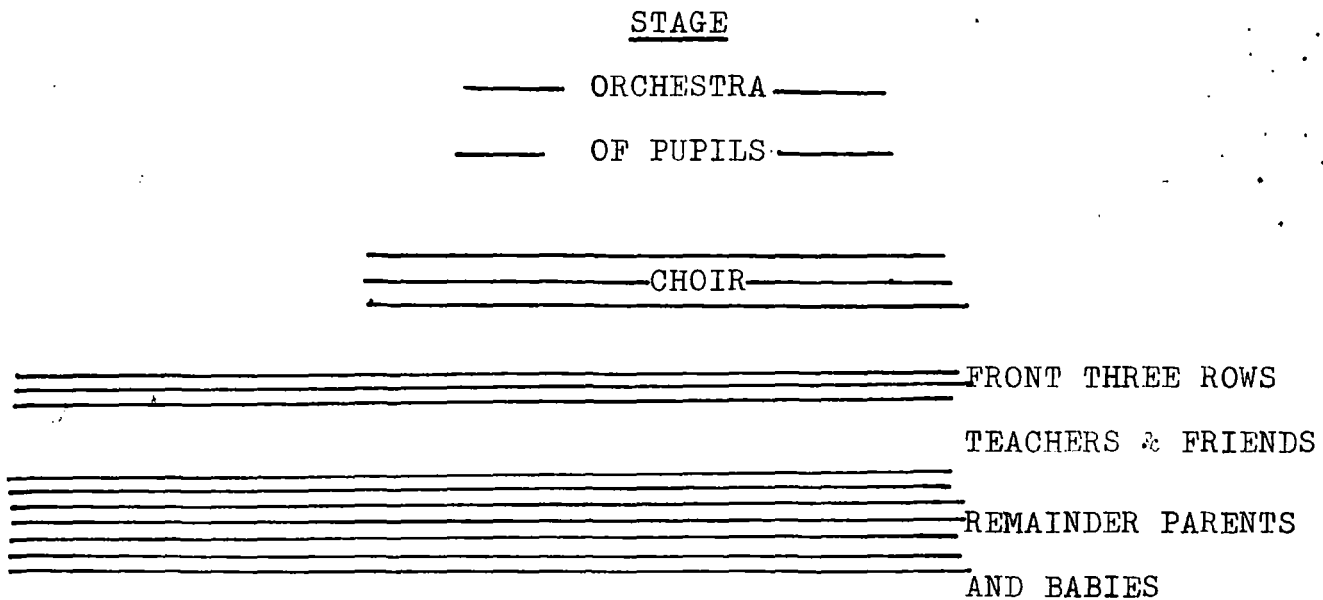
I play in the Salvation Army band.

What's it like?

I'm going to give it up when I leave school. I like playing trombone like but don't like the band".

No boys sung in any choir, either school or church. These two boys played in the orchestra and bands despite their structure rather than because of it. If you're 'good at the trombone' then that's the only opportunity of playing. The effect of structure upon the boy's feeling for music is best expressed by discussing the school bands show put on for parents and friends at Municipal School in the summer term of 1970.

Diagram 1



The concert consisted of three parts, firstly music played by the band, secondly music sung by the band and choir and thirdly a 'sing song' in which everyone joined in.

In the first two sections the band played adequately and with great precision. The music master made jokes about composers names like Grieg and the music consisted of light classical themes, e.g. Britten. Each number was enthusiastically applauded by the teachers and friends in the first three rows, however the rest of the audience was not enthusiastic, talked through the pieces etc. In the choral pieces the choir stood stiffly to attention and breathed massively in and out as taught by music masters everywhere. Teachers were very proud of the occasion and were heard to say how "very good the children were", "how well behaved".

At the end of the concert however a duplicated sheet of songs was handed out that consisted of songs that were "Black and White Minstrel" type. Directly the drummer started the rhythm section of the orchestra off in the first number all the music masters attempts to encourage participation by the audience was seen to be superfluous.

Everyone behind the first three rows became animated and were belting out "Way down Swanee". By the second number "I'm forever blowing bubbles" the orchestra had changed completely in tone and the choir began spontaneously clapping to the beat. For all intents and purposes the music master had become superfluous. The boys and girls had seen their parents get into the situation (remember they were facing them across three rows of teachers) had become involved themselves and their enthusiasm in clapping fired their parents even more.

The teachers on the other hand reacted as the music master expected the parents to react, with an initial nervousness about singing and more nervousness about being in the middle of two sets of singing people who were behaving as if they were in the Club on a Saturday night rather than attempting to be 'cultured'. As one teacher remarked in the staff room next morning "There was no need for that singing it ruined the whole concert". What does that mean in terms of the whole experience of music for the boys interviewed? I think it shows that music as experienced at school bears very little relationship to music as experienced at home and whilst this music at home is not, objectively, teenage music ("I'm forever blowing bubbles" is not "I can't get no satisfaction") it is experienced as pop. In that only 15% of boys said that their parents disliked pop music I would think that the differences between their parents music and their own will not be so large as between both sets and the school.

This has implications for my general argument about the structures within which spare-time activities are performed, for the structure of this concert was changed directly the content varied from that which is normally

allowed in that structure. The structure of a school concert could not withstand the pressure of being turned into, for a while, a club sing-song. After the sing-song ended it became a school concert again. However, whilst the structure was changed the whole experience for the pupils changed dramatically and they seemed to be able to express themselves more.

## (2) COMMERCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND SPARE-TIME ACTIVITIES

Commercial organisations create a very different set of social relationships compared with the evangelical institutions mentioned above.

"Yet dissociation from the work situation, and from middle-class dominated authority contexts, has its corollary in leisure; the rejection of the youth club, except for those few which exert little discipline, do not insist on regular attendance, and do not intrude on the groups or the individuals autonomy. Hence the emphasis on commercial milieux, the caff, the cinema, the dance-hall." (DOWNES, 1965; )

The young people of the working class cannot command the resources and power to build their own institutions (in terms of bricks and mortar). This can be contrasted with the student union facilities at universities which can provide an alternative to the commercial institutions of the capitalist society around the university. Consequently, the working class boys must use these organisations, all of which are run primarily for profit. Nevertheless, the question of who controls these facilities, is vital for them; it is important to try and understand that control, and their reaction to it.

These differences in the type of control experienced by the boys is directly related to the type of aims that the institutions have, and to what they are trying to do 'with' or 'for' the boy. The difficulties of, say, the youth club are immense in that they are attempting to change the boys attitudes and behaviour, yet do not have the compulsory powers of attendance that the schools have. This is reflected in one boys reaction to the youth club,

"Would you tell me what you do on an average Saturday evening?

Roland - We used to go down the youth club, but now we stay on the streets.

Why did you leave the youth club?

Roland - They were telling us/<sup>what</sup> to do and that's not fair.

Why not?

Roland - They can't tell us what to do".

Here is a very strong echo of the boys attitude towards school, with the one vital proviso that they do not have to go to the youth club. So, they try out youth clubs, and from many clubs there is a beckoning freedom. However, this freedom is soon contradicted, when certain forms of behaviour are labelled aimless or negativistic, when violence is discouraged as a totally unstructured leisure activity. As soon as the boys engage in any of these activities, they are 'told what to do'. As a consequence, the boys leave the youth club.

Yet this differs from the nature of the control exercised by commercial institutions. The AIMS of commercial institutions are, primarily, to make money. As far as the boys are concerned, for a certain amount of money you can buy a certain amount of freedom; since the aim of the institution is not primarily to interfere with

the behaviour or ideas of those that enter them.

Thus, if we were to compare the formal control structure of a dance-hall and a youth club, it would be found that both are dominated and run by non-working class adults. Nevertheless, if you were to look specifically at the way in which the organisation attempts to interfere with boys behaviour, it is easy to see the way in which boys experience a greater amount of freedom in the dance-hall. Whilst there are limits within the dance hall, no one is trying to get you to THINK about something that you don't feel like; you can come as often or as seldom as you like. Both sides of the COMMERCIAL contract respect the autonomy of the other; with the single and vital proviso of all capitalist institutions, that the seller can refuse the buyer if he has not got the cash to fulfil the relationship.

The increasing economic power of the young, has provided individual boys with some economic power, and this enables them to gain access to these institutions. The extent of this economic power in the hands of these particular boys who have not yet left school, can be grossly over-estimated, since they exist for the most part on pocket money and part-time earnings. For these boys, dance-halls are expensive places, and do not necessarily enter the realm of possible realistic choices on a Saturday evening. For THOSE boys the street corner is the most likely institution open, it is cheap and always accessible. Consideration of the street will take up most of the next group of activities.

The nature of both of the major institutions used by boys, the dance-hall and the football ground, is changing. In the very recent past these institutions have tightened

up on the amount of freedom that they allow their customers. Anyone who stands behind the goals at football matches in a First Division Club will realise the increase in police activity in recent years has been enormous. Football programmes and statements in the local and national press show the clubs dislike of the bad publicity given to them by the 'small minority of fans' that have been labelled soccer hooligans. This fear of 'public' reaction has led to a tightening up in social control in football grounds, culminating, for the present at any rate, in November 1972 to a member of the Football Association calling for the banning of all under 18 year olds from football grounds. In dance-halls recent years has seen the closing down of a number of smaller dance-halls and the tightening of control within the two major chains, Rank and Mecca which now try and exclude 'unruly' elements. In both institutions the amount of freedom open to the boys has been limited. This has increased the general importance of the street as an institution for youth spare-time activity.

Nevertheless, in terms of the boys actual experience there is still an important difference between commercial and evangelical institutions.

### Going to Footy

It must be stressed that most football is watched on the telly. Match of the Day and its ITV equivalent Shoot were constantly referred to in the interviews.

"Do you watch much football?

John S. - Every chance that I can.

Do you ever got to Roker Park?

John S. - Sometimes ... not very often.

Do you and your friends talk about football much?

John S. - Aye, when we come out on Sunday morning,

we start to talk about Match of the Day - from Saturday night".

Thus watching football is not necessarily a cold Saturday afternoon on the terraces. An interest in watching football FOR THE GAME IN ITSELF, as a spectator sport is in fact better served by watching the television than by watching Sunderland at Roker Park.

"Do you watch much football?

Edward - Saturday and Sunday on the telly. In the week when its on.

Do you go down Roker Park?

Edward - Not much this year. Its not much you know. When you see footy on the telly Roker Park isn't as good.

Why?

Edward - Well, Leeds are just a lot better to watch than Sunderland".

Anyone who has watched football over the last couple of years, and especially anyone who has watched Sunderland, will recognise that football as a game in terms of skill is indeed better to watch on telly, unless you live near a good First Division side. Watching Spurs, Leeds and Manchester United on the television every week has reduced the attraction of watching Sunderland and other 'workman-like' sides. Also, if you are purely interested in the skills of the game the technology of television with its famous action replays shows the game much better.

Thus the question "Are you interested in football?" was answered "Yes" by 81 and "No" by 10. Yet an interest in football was never sufficient of itself to get people onto the terraces. There was another question; How many times have you been to Roker Park this season?



Never	32	This question was answered at a time
Once or twice	16	when there had been nine or ten
3-5 times	13	First Class games played at Roker in
6 or more	22	that season. So six or more times
No answer	10	shows a fairly heavy commitment out of the possible opportunities.

Therefore, out of 81 very interested in soccer a large number never seem to go to Roker Park to watch the football. I will suggest that 'going to a football match' represents a collective experience over and above the game of football, rather the boy that goes to Roker Park must see it as something more than a football game to watch. There is something to participate in as much as something to watch, and the action that the boys participate in is not necessarily as totally linked with what goes on on the field of play. A similar point will be made about the experience of going to a dance and pop music.

### Pop Music

The question of the importance of pop music to these boys is one that I feel the data does not allow me to go into as deeply as I would feel necessary. As I have already suggested much of the work on pop music to date seems to over-simplify some of the complex relationships involved. Pop music has an existence for all of these boys NOT just those that go to dance-halls. This music has a meaning and is important to young people both as a series of discrete sounds (singles, L.Ps radio shows) and as a total genre. That is, each boy not only has a relationship with, for example, the Beatles as a group, but with pop music as a whole. Similarly the boys relate to these two phenomena (i.e. the performer as an individual and the genre as a whole) not only as themselves as individuals but to their

group too which might either be confined to the street corner or their whole generation. Thus the relationship of youth to pop music is a complex one in terms of who exactly is reacting to who.

e.g.

YOUTH		POP MUSIC
Individual boy	_____	Individual 'sound'
Small group	_____	Groups music as a whole
General group	_____	Pop music as a whole

This is more than simply a neat pattern of categories, it represents an attempt to explain some massive and apparently misunderstood relationships between experience and musical constructs.

Thus it is not sufficient to simply say that, in answer to the question, Pop music is ....

Favourable responses 70 (Great; Fab; groovy baby groovy;  
fuckin hellish etc.)

Uncommitted 9 (Alright; okay)

Disliked it                    9   (Bloody horrible; silly)

even though whilst this shows some relationship between the boys and pop music as a whole. Similarly boys were asked. Do your friends like pop music? 80 said 'yes' and 9 said 'no'. From both these questions it appears possible to say definitely that boys and their friends like pop music. Whilst this is self-evidently true, what it means is something very different because boys actually experience the cultural construct of pop music very differently and define what pop music is very differently.

On an individual level the relationship between the boy and his five favourite pop groups/stars represented one of the most inexplicable parts of the whole research. As has been said before, there was no significant difference between the two schools in any of the areas of overall

interest or indeed in any of the separate questions with the single exception of the two schools selection of their five favourite pop groups/stars. Thus in Municipal Comprehensive School this was the boys selection

- 21 Deep Purple
- 15 Lead Zeppelin
- 13 Free
- 10 Jimmy Hedrix; Black Sabbath
- 9 Beatles
- 7 Herman Hermits
- 6 The Who
- 5 T. Rex
- 4 Elvis Presley; Desmond Decker; C.C.S.; Family Dylan
- 3 Tom Jones; Jthro Tull; Blue Mink; Tremeloes; Edwin Starr; Dave Clark Five; Ground Hogs
- 2 Mary Hopkins; Cream; Andy Williams; Mungo Jerry; Canned Heat; Capt. Beefheart; Bee Gees; Pickety Witch; Tamla Motown
- 1 Monkees; Hollies; Scaffold; Cilla; Frankie Howerd; Band; Rolling Stones; Frank Sinatra; Supremes; Yellow; Temptations; Simon & Garfunkel; Sean Connery; Dean Martin; Kirk Douglas; Morecombe & Wise; Smokey Robinson; Dave Edmunds; Rolf Harris; Rory Gallagher; Vanity Fair; Purple Haze; Barron Nights; King Crimson
- 6 None

These choices could be characterised as a 'hard rock' choice, 59 votes being cast for the five favourite pop groups, all of which are characterised by a driving beat kind of music. Indeed, Hermans Hermits, are the only group receiving more than 4 votes who has not at some time played hard rock music. In December 1970 when this survey was made the list reads like a who's who of hard rock.

However, looking at the choices made by Cunningham Secondary Modern School, a very different picture emerges. One that is far less tightly classifiable, and is possibly only classifiable by the absence of hard rock music.

- 15 Beatles
- 13 Tom Jones
- 11 Elvis
- 7 Cliff Richard
- 6 Hermans Hermitts; Hollies; Rolling Stones
- 5 Freddie and the Dreamers
- 4 Monkees; C.S.S.; Free
- 3 Deep Purple; Jethro Tull; Engelbert Humperdink;  
The Who; Tremeloes; 10 years after; Cream
- 2 Des O'Connor; Shadows; Val Doonican; Scaffold;  
Shirley Bassey; Frank Sinatra; Lead Zeppelin
- 1 Moody Blues; Blue Mink; Desmond Dekka; Fleetwood  
Mac; Marmalade; Cilla; Stevie Wonder; Mary Hopkins;  
Dusty Springfield; Sky Poncy; Box Tops; Batchelors;  
Andy Williams; Roy Orbison; Mungo Jerry; Max Bygraves;  
Benny Hill; Lesley Crowther; Popkins; Jimmy Hendrix;  
Dave Clarke Five; Canned Heat; Black Sabbath; Ground  
Hogs; Captain Beefheart
- 10 None

To any officianado of pop music in 1970 this list has a particularly deja vu look about it, it seems to lack any of the new groups in the Municipal School choices.

Yet, both groups of boys 'like pop music', both groups of boys define their friends as 'liking pop music', both groups of boys listen to records and Top of the Pops to the same amount; both are as likely or unlikely to read magazines about pop music. The only set of meanings that I can concretely deduce from this is that the concept of 'pop music' is very diffuse as far as working class youth

is concerned. You can watch Top of the Pops for either the Tom Jones-Elvis Presley-Cliff Richard axis, or for the Deep Purple-Lead Zeppelin-Free axis and see in it a good programme. For it is in the nature of the 'pop music' institution (such as Jimmy Saville and Top of the Pops) to try and please as large a group as possible of young people.

Unfortunately it is very difficult to say anything more positive about pop music as a cultural experience for the boys. The nature of the research was not sufficiently sensitive to this area to be able to say what, for example, driving rock, means to these boys that like it, or what it means to those that don't like it. I feel that I can only say something general about the musical experience of these boys and of its importance. It does seem to be quite important as an atmosphere maker, rather than as something that you listen to attentively. Unlike football it is not a subject that is talked about, 'Did you hear the latest single?' is not as common as 'Did you see Macdonald's goal on Match of the Day?' In fact, talking about pop music did not seem to crop up at all in activities, but talking about football did a lot.

"Do you listen to pop music?

Wyn - All the time.

At home?

Wyn - On the radio. I can't see it on a Thursday night, because I'm down the club on a Thursday.

Do you ever go to a place where there is a juke box?

Wyn - We go to the Mecca on Sunday and sometimes we go to cafes with me mates sometimes."

Thus this interview allows the researcher to say that the boy expresses great interest in pop music (his five favourite pop groups were Beatles; Deep Purple; Black

Sabbath; the Who; Lead Zeppelin) and that he spends quite a lot of time involved in activities concerned with pop music. But it does not allow me to say anything about the meaning of the groups or the records for him. It is this deeper level that a cultural analysis of meanings of music must be carried out.

Going to a dance and going to watch football as total experience

The dance-hall represents somewhere to go for those that not only enjoy pop music but also have reasons for going to that institution that are not directly linked with pop music.

"Do you listen to much pop music?

IAN - Well I stay in on a Thursday night (to watch Top of the Pops). Then I'm back on the streets again about half past eight.

Do you ever go down the Mecca?

IAN - Well I used to go down the Rank on a Saturday night but I used to get into trouble so I stopped going."

"Do you and your mates listen to pop music when you go round each others homes.

William - Aye we've got all the L.Ps.

Do you go down the Mecca?

William - No we get kicked around by the skinheads. Don't they have special nights with skinhead sort of music?

William - No, they're down there all the time."

So the dance-halls are not simply places where music is played, but where fights and trouble take place. Not surprisingly the fights and the troubles become more important than the music, even though both of the boys

specify their interest in other ways of listening to music.

Similarly the dance-hall attracts boys who are not necessarily interested in pop music, but are more into the extra-musical activities in the dance-halls.

"Do you like pop music?

Tony - It's not bad.

Where do you go to listen to it?

Tony - Top of the Pops and a few records around me mates.

Do you ever go down the Rank?

Tony - Yeh, with me mates. Go down there, chat up the lasses, and have a bit of a fight with someone."

Thus for some the dance-hall is not an institution that can be understood in terms of music.

For others, the dance-hall provides both a place to listen to music and a place to either chat up the lasses or have a fight. These boys seem very committed to pop music of a specific kind and in fact they would appear to be using the dance hall in a very different way.

"What do you do on an average Saturday evening?

Bert - Don't usually go out on a Saturday. Go out on a Sunday. Last Sunday we went down the Mecca and saw the Free and Amazing Blondell.

Do you and your mates go down there every Sunday?

Bert - Yes.

What do you do down there?

Bert - Listen to the music and chat up the lasses.

Do you ever get involved in any kind of trouble?

Bert - Sometimes with a couple of skins. Sometimes when the skins come we have a scrap ... sometimes."

"Do you like pop music?

Doug - It's hellish great.

Where do you listen to it?

Doug - On tellym but we go down the Mecca on Tuesday. Tuesday they have special music for skins.

Why?

Doug - Well, they don't let us in other nights. Any case, the music is best on a Tuesday and the lasses too."

These boys seem a lot more selective about using the institution of dance-halls. In a way, they are pushing the autonomy of the buyer in the cash nexus situation as far as possible. They say we are not only here for the music that you offer us, but we are also here for the social institutions that we can create out of the freedom that we are allowed. We come for the music that you sell us AND we come for the lasses and the trouble that we can make.

This can be directly linked with the nature of the experience of going to a football match, indeed the connection is made by the media in their discussion of the 'rising tide of violence'.

16

Over the past few years there has been claims about an increase in violence by teenagers both at dance-halls and at football matches. Whether this violence IS actually increasing or, as is more likely, it represents a different type of violence from the 20s and 30s does not really concern me here. What is important is the nature of the experience for the boys behind the headline of violence. What is violence at football matches and dance-halls?

"Do you watch much football?

Derek M. - Aye, down the Fulwell end every match.

What do you do?

Derek M. - we chant, have a scrap with some of the lads.



Perhaps have a crack at other supporters. Keep away from coppers. Watch the match too (laughs).

Do you get into trouble?

Derek M. - Aye but not real trouble and its great."

Football is being offered to these boys by Sunderland F.C., or rather the right to stand and watch a football match and to shout for Sunderland. Rather than simply accept that, they take part in a complete and different set of experiences called 'going to footy'. This includes watching the football, and in fact is pervaded throughout by what is happening on the field in front of them, but is a collection of experiences that are not simply watching a game of soccer. Such experiences are difficult for me to articulate, let alone the boys. To be at your team's ground in the middle of a good game of football is more than watching a game of soccer. To go with your mates to the Fulwell end is to take part in a collective and creative experience that starts at about 1.30 p.m. and finishes at about 6 o'clock. This experience may lead to violence either of a verbal - chanting - or of a physical character, but is not necessarily an experience characterised by violence.

Similarly in a dance hall. The music, like the football, pervades the experience but does not limit that experience to a spectator one. Taylor has written historically about the fan attempting to recapture control 18

17 In fact the only serious football riot at Roker Park occurred after they had been beaten in their second successive home match by three clear goals. This, being the year after they were relegated, a section of the crowd did in fact smash up part of the town after the match. Thus, obviously, the extra-football activities are related to the football and the result.

of his game; and my research would back up this rejection of a pure spectator role in both the musical and the football experience. As was said at the beginning of this section the commercial institution offers services for money, but it also fails to limit rigidly what cannot be done by the buyer. This room for manoeuvre is the area that these boys are trying to control for themselves. Any visitor to football or dance-halls over the past four years could not have failed to notice the attempts by those that run these institutions to limit that freedom to create their own non-spectator experience with the introduction of more bouncers, more stewards and of course more police.

The participation of these boys in the experience of a football match is a group experience with their mates. It represents a challenge to the more spectator role of the sport and represents a possibility of the group creation of action. The action created - chanting, fighting, singing on the terraces - fighting, having a laugh in the dance-hall - is action that represents the cultural background of the boys. There is none of the quiet appreciation of the skills of football or music that might characterise a more intellectually inspired audience. Instead there is involvement and creation of their own kind of action. With regard to pop music this would also cut across the simplistic generational boundary drawn by the concept of 'teenage culture'; since the experience of going to a dance-hall would be different if one's own concern was the perception of the music or the feeling of the physical dance. If it's the fights and the lasses that are important then the structure of the music cannot be the main reason for going. Similarly with football. This represents a distinctive attitude to the total experience of these spare-time

activities; a way of understanding them that does not see them as a means to an end, but rather as a total experience.

(3) HOW DOING 'NOTHING' WHEN ADDED TO A 'WEIRD IDEA'  
EQUALS 'GETTING INTO TROUBLE'

The great majority of all the boys spare-time activity was spent on the street, and before discussing the actual meaning of the activities on the street it is important to stress why the alternative institutions are not open to the boys as REAL CHOICES.

Why not the youth club?

The youth club, being an evangelical institution has all the limitations of those institutions as far as the boys are concerned. (See interview page 35 Tell me what you do on an average Saturday evening?) In the case of the youth club these limitations are of an obvious nature, and reside in the nature of the contradiction of the ideologies of the youth service, i.e. between the need to reach the youths and the need to change their behaviour in some way. Because of this contradiction, there is a beckoning freedom from the club that is soon denied. This contradiction was reflected in the boys attitude to youth clubs. Whilst 35 out of 48 boys said that they liked going to a youth club only five admitted to actually going to a youth club on a Saturday evening. Of these only two actually mention the youth club as an 'organisation' they found attractive. Therefore for most of the boys 'Going to a Youth Club' was an activity that did not include attendance and compliance with the organisation. Rather it is a place that exists physically as a building that provides shelter and institutionally it plays a dual role; firstly as its official role, a place to play badminton; secondly as an institution that physically exists near the doorway of the

club run by the authorities.

"What do you do on an average Saturday evening?

Charlie - Well I go down the club to meet my mates.

What do you do there?

Charlie - Just meet my mates and hang around. We don't go inside much."

Thus the institution of the youth club is transformed into the institution of the youth clubs doorway. This latter institution is used by the boys for completely different purposes than those that the authorities might wish.

#### Why not Commercial Institutions?

As has been said above it is necessary to have sufficient economic power to gain entry into these organisations. For most of the boys most of the time there is simply not enough cash.

#### Why not the house?

The only alternative left for these boys to the street is the house. The restrictions imposed upon groups of boys in the house of their parents and the parents of their friends are less obvious and less articulated than those of the youth clubs.

However, a large number of boys do go and visit each others homes on a Saturday evening and at other times. Though the way that they do, ~~so~~ betrays the limitations that are felt by the boys. Most of them talked of going down to their mates home and staying there for a while before coming out again. Three examples of this:

"What do you do on an average Saturday evening?

Well, its like this, I go out with me friends, we walk about. We might go in one of the houses and then we come back in and watch football on the telly.

I just go down me friends house and we all stopain there for a bit and watch television, and we just go out and call for some other mates, go down the shop and buy some chips and come back and watch telly.

Go round me mates house, and watch telly, if his Mum and Dad aren't in. Then get togehter, and go out and hang around."

Homes, as far as Saturday evening spare-time activities are concerned, are essentially places where parents are either absent or present, and also where the television is. If the parents are present then this severely restricts the amount of freedom available for the boys. Saturday probably represents the only evening when the boys can get together to watch the telly in the parents absence, so this does present a real attraction for the boys. Also Match of the Day is on the box and it can be watched with your mates in a simulated crowd activity, rather than 'Shoot' with your Dad on Sunday afternoon.

If the television is the attraction for the boys, what then is the detraction? This is never articulated by the boys, but judging by the constant movement out of the house (not one boy said that he went round to his mates and stayed there all evening), they do NOT feel at ease as a group in each others houses. The interaction of a Saturday night out requires a high degree of freedom to create and follow the 'wierd ideas' that occur to the boys. In their parents homes the possibilities of coming into contact with the forces of social control are almost inescapable. If something goes wrong there is no chance of running away, or of not being identified, and whilst Klein and others style parental control in working class homes as 'weak and inconsistent' she has not had to face a father who has just

discovered on Sunday morning that the telly was broken by his sons friends the night before. Such authority represents a constant check upon behaviour, a check that leaves even less room for manoeuvre than the youth club.

In this way, having been priced out of the cinema, dance-halls and having walked out of the clubs and homes the boys are left nothing but the street. But in mentioning the negative aspects of the other possibilities of places to go on a Saturday night, I want also to outline the positive aspects of the street. The boys are not simply driven out by elimination of choices onto the streets, there is also an element of positive choice about the street as a venue for action. It is free in both commercial terms and in terms of close control. The possibility of a range of different actions is great in the street. Most importantly it is in the street where the boys can decide what they want to do, when they want to do it, and when they want to stop it, more than any other place.

"What do you do on an average Saturday evening?

FRANK - On Saturday, I usually go about with my friends and that, knock about and have a few laughs. Have a few laughs?

FRANK - Well, we just go anywhere that we want really, there's no certain limit to where we go really; we just don't bother to make any arrangements. We just tell jokes and what we've done during the day."

"Do you ever just knock about the streets with your mates?

Roland - Yes, a lot, just about in the streets deciding what to do with the time."

So whilst it is true as one boy said "that we stand on the corner because there is nowhere else to stand on"

the street does give a great deal of freedom to boys who feel they are closely watched at school. It allows the group to have autonomy over its action, to have its 'weird ideas' and to carry them out.

It is important to mention the importance within the context of the use of the streets of the boys over-riding passion, namely playing and talking about footy. (This is no place for a discourse on why playing football has such fanatically strong support as a day-to-day activity amongst working-class youths; here I will try and make sense of the meaning of the game for these boys.) I have already discussed the importance of the structure of the actual playing of the game as far as the boys are concerned (i.e. most of the boys saw a distinct difference between playing football in an organised team every Saturday or Sunday, and kicking a ball around when and where they felt like it.) What is immediately important in discussing the choice of location of this activity is why the street is chosen. Obviously if boys want to play football then they need a wide preferably flat area to play in. There are few such areas in working class estates. The one open space in Municipal estate was in the centre near the school and it was hopelessly bumpy to play footy on. As far as the boys were concerned the street and its immediate environs are the only places to engage in their favourite activity.

Thus effectively the boys were left only with the streets to go to on a Saturday evening, after an hour or two watching telly. Yet also the street provides them with room and freedom caused by lack of control to decide exactly what they want to do. Importantly too it also provides an area for them playing football.

Why in groups?

All previous research into rule-breaking and non-rule-breaking activity carried out by working class youth in their spare-time has noted that all activities are carried out in groups. The immediate response in every interview, except one, to the question "What do you do on an average Saturday night?" was to mention repeatedly the 'mates' of the boys being interviewed. Thus very obviously, the boys experience all spare-time activity as group activity (which is of course the same way that they experience school; especially any street activity was always in a group. It is not possible to fully explicate the social psychological background of the group experience, in this paper; nor is it possible to discuss historically the group nature of working class experience over time. Both of these would be necessary to fully answer the question 'why in groups?' and there is insufficient space. However, I would argue that the way to 'individualist action' and 'self-fulfilment' is never there for the boys of Sunderland. J.B. Mays comments upon this lack in Liverpool youth in a derogatory tone, by seeing it as a 'lack of individual resourcefulness' and a failure to achieve the methods of expressing oneself. Using an analysis that was based upon the appreciation of cultural diversity it would not be possible to perceive this group action as being part of a cultural background of working class behaviour rather than a pathological 'lack' of any supposedly universalistic behaviour.

Thus for the boys that referred to their mates constantly when talking of Saturday night, were referring to the group nature of the solution to something that was



experienced by them as a group problem. Certain of their problems were experienced as collective and these allowed for the collective working out of solutions. Many writers discuss this in their work; within the subcultural tradition (Cohen and Downes); within the political tradition (Lenin and Mao). All these writers point towards the way in which certain problems can only be met collectively rather than individually. I would suggest that Saturday night in Sunderland is one such problem.

### Why do 'nothing'?

Having established the importance of both the street and the group in these boys activities it is vital now to try and understand why the main activity of the boys was 'doing nothing'. This is undoubtedly the most difficult question to answer as it contains a whole series of problems that, at first, appear to be simply semantic; but in many ways this is the crux of the <sup>chapter</sup>~~paper~~. As has been commented the previous studies seem to have missed this point in attempting to understand the spare@time activities of working class youth. Yet in focussing our attention upon the activity of 'doing nothing' or 'just knocking about' we immediately see that, experientially for the boys, and analytically for us, this is in fact doing something. This is despite the fact that the boys THEMSELVES describe it as doing nothing.

"What sort of things do you do on an average Saturday?

Derek - Just go round to a house, watch telly, play a few records. Just walk around.

Walk around ...?

Derek - Just walk around."

"What sort of things do you do with your mates in the streets?

Adam - stand around ... nothing really.

What do you do?

Adam - We don't do anything much.

Nothing at all?

Adam - No, just stand around."

These seemingly repetitious interviews were repeated many times with different boys. As far as most of them were concerned, when they tried to explain they did seem to do nothing on a Saturday evening. Yet are they in fact doing nothing when they are 'doing nothing'? I have already outlined the existence of something; namely standing on corners in groups. However, as far as these boys are concerned nothing memorable seems to happen to them on a Saturday night.

It is important to briefly repeat the methodological point here about language, that in asking these boys these questions, we are in fact imposing alien techniques of thinking and reasoning. The boys continue to give a seemingly endless series of deadpan answers to the questions, because the questions assume that there is something more going on; that standing around is a means to an end. Whereas in terms of their own experience standing around on street corners is done in order to ... stand around on street corners; the experience itself justifies the experience; they don't gather on street corners in order to plan rule-breaking acts; they don't walk around the streets in order to do anything. Thus when I repeatedly ask 'No what were you doing?' the boy repeatedly answers what they were in fact doing; nothing.

Doing nothing then does not deserve to be neglected as an activity simply because the boys do not articulate the sort of activities it contains. For the main part a great deal of talking seems to go on when 'nothing' is being done.

"What sort of things do you do when you are just walking about?

John S. - Just talk.

Talk?

John S. - Just talk.

Does anything ever happen to you?

John S. - Nothing much, we keep moving about all the time so someone can't complain.

Complain?

John S. - Well people complain and we get into trouble. Not for doing owt but for just standing about."

"What sort of thing do you do with your mates?

Duncan - Just stand around talking about footy. About things.

Do you do anything else?

Duncan - Joke, lark about, carry on. Just what we feel like really.

What's that?

Duncan - Just doing things. Last Saturday someone started throwing bottles and we all got in.

What happened?

Duncan - Nothing really."

(Also see Frank above)

Standing around talking amongst themselves seems to have a real importance to the boys which mirrors the importance of talking in school and the importance of silence to the teacher. This also responds closely to Whytes Street Corner Society where the street corner represented the only chance of the men to get together and talk things over on their own. This can be under-valued by observers who feel free at any time to assert their ideas in almost any circumstance.

Talking, as is the case for most of these experiences, cannot be simply fitted into a simplistic means end scheme, i.e. the boys do not talk in order to explicate their ideas or something, or to search for some kind of truth. Rather, they stand around and exchange stories which need never be true or real, but which are as interesting as possible. About football, about each other, talking not to communicate ideas but to communicate the experience of talking. It passes the time and it underlines the group nature of this method of passing the time. Not only football and pop music were talked about; and a great deal of joking goes on. It was between the area of talking, joking and carrying on that things emerged that the boys called 'ideas'.

These 'ideas' formed the basis for group action and it is the way in which these spontaneously evolve, and are carried out that constitute one of the most active elements of 'hanging about' (Incidentally it is interesting that school never seems to be talked about much for very long after school hours. Observations at the end of the school day showed that the major topic of conversation whilst waiting at the bus stop was what happened at school, but by the time the boys got off the bus, school did not impinge significantly upon their discussions unless something really important had happened.)

### 'Weird Ideas'

"Do you ever go out and knock about with the lads?

Albert - Sometimes, when I feel like it.

What do you do?

Albert - Sometimes we get into mischief.

Mischief?

Albert - Well, somebody gets a weird idea into their head, and they start to carry it out, and others join in.

Weird idea?

Albert - Things ... like going around smashing milk bottles."

Boys on a Saturday night in Sunderland, in a group, on a street corner, are aware that they are 'doing nothing' and are bored with it in their own minds, essentially wanting something to happen. They want to have an interesting or an exciting time, a time that would not be boring where they could create some action. For the most part they seem fairly sure that this only rarely happens, but their Saturday night activity can best be understood as an attempt to maximise the chances that they will be involved in something remarkable (literally worthy of remark viz the above discussion of talking). Consequently, we must not be surprised if they see their Saturday evenings spent on the streets as boring, rather we must compare it with their perception of being involved in something exciting. These perceptions are obviously linked with what they expect from certain past-times, e.g. they know that nothing ~~exc~~iting will happen at home with Mum and Dad; they perceive a small chance of something happening around a youth club, and a slightly larger chance of something happening on a street corner. So, even if they are bored every Saturday evening there is always the chance that something will happen the following Saturday.

If we analyse the street corner activity of doing nothing in groups in the light of always hoping that something will happen, then the creation and the putting into effect of 'ideas' by the group can be seen as one of the most significant group experiences. Their significance is not only in terms of the group experience but also in terms of the wider society, for it is these ideas born out

of the street corner groups, doing nothing that are to a large extent the 'juvenile delinquency' of the police and criminologists.

Most significantly, these ideas are born out of boredom and the expectation of future and continuing boredom, and this effects the sort of ideas that they are. A good 'idea' must contain the seeds of continuing change (from the boring situation) as well as excitement and involvement. Smashing milk bottles is a good example of this since it typifies the way in which they are put into effect. Methodologically, it is not possible for any researcher to get the kids to talk about such genesis of ideas since the question 'Why?' to the smashing of milk bottles is one that is not possible of the boy to answer outside of the context of the whole Saturday evening.

"What sort of things do you do with your mates?

Mac - Just knock about.

Doing what?

Mac - Not much really. Things just happen. Like smashing milk bottles.

Why did you do that?

Mac - I dunno ... er ..."

"What do you do on street corners?

Dick - Police never saw us do anything wrong, so they shouldn't pick on us. But we just used to play around, smashing things.

What sort of things?

Dick - Anything really - I dunno why - just ideas."

<sup>An</sup>  
~~The~~ answer to the last question, for example, is not really possible within the boys own terms, outside of the total experience of the time. For the sort of interaction that we are referring to here is not planned smashing of

things. It is not that boys go out on a Saturday night looking for milk bottles or other things to smash. Rather they use smashing as something interesting to do.

"What do you do when you just knock around the streets?

Richard - Sometimes get into fights, or trouble, but mostly nothing much.

Just try and give me an example.

Richard - Er ... last Saturday we was hanging about and someone kicked a bottle over and it smashes.

Then we all started and then we all started smashing bottles."

Smashing things does seem to be an important component of these 'ideas'. Indeed this would appear to go to a wider set of objects apart from milk bottles since only 18 out of 93 boys had never smashed something like a street lamp in the past year.

"What sort of things do you do on a Saturday evening?

Peter - Usually play football down the streets, play footy. Just gang down the Court or somewhere then come home.

What other things do you do?

Peter - On Sunday I knock around with me mates.

What do you do?

Peter - Well, cause trouble, you know. Play knocking on doors, Throw stones at windows and that. Cause fights mostly."

Is it really necessary to explain the excitement of smashing things whether they are milk bottles, shop windows,

\* Edward - I've been in trouble recently, because my friends smashed a big shop window, but that's all.

buses, telephone boxes etc. if the alternative is to stand there and do nothing. Whilst it is true that there is no real premeditation to smash things up it is in the genesis of such ideas that we would expect such concepts as deviance amplification to be of importance. A group of boys who are bored and are standing on a street corner are much more likely to have the idea of smashing up something that has been perceived as being smashed up before not necessarily in any imitative sense, but mainly because it will be in their consciousness as something which can be smashed. This form of amplification is a fairly complex model that doesn't in fact need the name, since it differs from the original model. But, given the likely creation of ideas by the boys in street corners these ideas are going to reflect the consciousness of boys, which on each Saturday evening will be effected by things that have occurred to them through local channels of communication or through the mass media.

\* Steven - Well you know the grand prix down there, well we duff the machines up and get free goes on them. You know the corporation buses well, they go in for a cup of tea we'll go and open the doors and go and kick the buses in.

21 For example the amplification model outlined in YOUNG, J. (1971); 67-101, is one that could not be used so deterministically in this research.



The most notable single case was recounted to me one lunch hour by three boys sitting on the 'green' in the middle of Municipal Estate. They told me about their Saturday night activities of about a month ago. This group were just knocking about the streets and they walked past a closed youth club. They stood around the youth club for a while and then someone said that it would be better inside the club. So the group broke in to the club and once inside said that they felt really great walking about in the dark - 'like spies' trying not to make a noise. Then someone started scrapping with another boy, the lights were put on and the scene was immediately transformed to a bar room brawl in the Wild West with boys being knocked over tables, smashing up chairs and mirrors. Importantly the fight itself was not a 'real' one but the scenario being played out was. After some while when most of the furniture (including table tennis table) was smashed up, 'the sherriff came to the door just like in the films' i.e. the police; then all the boys were scattered and some were caught by the police.

The boys claimed that hundreds of pounds worth of damage was done. Could this damage have been seen as 'caused' by certain media scenarios namely those of spy films and cowboys? This interpretation does not fit with the boys account. Whilst it is true that they were playing out these scenarios in their own way, it could not be said that they had caused the scene itself.

#### Getting into fights

One of the most common diversions for the boys is getting into a fight. Again, within the context of 'doing nothing' on a street corner, fights are an important and exciting occasion. Interest in fights and the pulling of

power of fights as against other past-times is best exemplified by the result of a single shout of 'fight' in a school playground. If we look at the interest in fights and fighting as an aspect apart from its background then we do need some form of explanation along the lines of DOWNES at the beginning of his Chapter 5 where he talks about the need to defend virility. Also if we look at gang fights apart from their background then we also need some form of territory concept as an explanation of the fights.

However, if we once more try and understand these fights in terms of boys hanging around on street corners, then we can see that a fight is simply an easy and an interesting event, and that this in itself is sufficient for us to understand its importance for the boys. It is exciting and it is something that can be easily brought about. In the same way as the boys relate to football; 'fights' represent a totally unstructured piece of action which is under the control of the boys and whose relationship with the 'fight game' is as distant as the relationship between footy and Wembley. So once more, rather than posit the cause of the action from purely within the fight we must look at the context of the whole life experience.

But, looking for a fight does seem to have two sets of meanings. For some of the boys concerned it was a casual occurrence, that they were excited about when it happened. For others it was the major occurrence of every Saturday night, and they actively styled their 'doing nothing' as looking for a fight - some of this second group styled themselves skin heads.

"What do you do on an average Saturday night?

Dave - Saturday night, why er we usually go around an off licence and get something to drink. Some

cider or some beer, we usually go round me mates place and play records, watch telly and then just knock about.

What do you do when you're knocking about?

Dave - Just kick about, play football or something, cause a bit of a mischief around the streets.

Mischief?

Dave - Well we just seem to get into it on the streets.

Do you get into any fights?

Dave - No ... well not many."

"What do you do when you hang about?

Ivan - Not much, play a bit of footy, get into a fight perhaps."

With these two boys it is fruitless to simply try and explain why they fight, since the drive towards fighting is not a vitally important part of their lives that can be teased out from the whole context. Given nothing to do, something happens, even if it is a yawn; or someone sitting down on somebody elses foot; someone turning over an old insult or an old injury and its this, in the context of 'nothing' that leads to fights. Something diminutive and unimportant outside of the context of 'doing nothing', yet raging and vital within that context.

For others through, 'fights' have a slightly more important set of meanings. Saturday evening is likely to contain some fights for these boys.

"What do you do on an average Saturday evening?

Steven - Oh I go down the town and knock around with the skins ... the skinheads.

What do you do?

Steven - Go in the Wimpey, or jump on some boys or something ... kick them.

Do you ever get into trouble for kicking boys?

Steven - If we are knocking about in gangs. The police pick on us for just knocking about in gangs. I've been down the police station twice for just knocking about in gangs.

What sort of things do you do with the lads?

Steven - Well, you know the Grand Prix down there ... well, we duff the machines up and get free goes on them. You know the Corporation buses, when they go in for a cup of tea we all go and open the doors and kick the buses in.

Do you play footy with the lads?

Steven - Sometimes ... we have scraps, you know kicking them in."

"What do you do on an average Saturday evening?

Fred - I go down the station, you know, in the Town Centre, and shoot through to Newcy, a whole gang of us. Then we walk around Newcy, ready for trouble. We find a few Maggie supporters and kick them in. Have a good scrap we do.

What do the police do?

Fred - They try and stop us sometimes ... catch us, but I give a false name and address because they think I'm from Newcy.

What sort of fights?

Fred - Well not real fights, as some of them might be quite matey, but still when you put the put in, you put the boot in, but we are friendly after like."

"What do you do on an average Saturday evening?

Paul - I knock around in a gang and we get into fights, scraps you know.

What sort of fights?

Paul - Well we meet up with another gang and start chucking milk bottles at them. Mainly the South Hylton gang.

Why do you do that?

Paul - So they can't get near us.

What happens when they do?

Paul - We have a scrap. Its good fun.

Do people get hurt?

Paul - No."

For these boys the 'excitement of the fight' has become institutionalised; it is not spontaneously undertaken against a backdrop of boredom from which it emerges as a highlight; rather it becomes a form of activity that is organised in order to remove the boredom that created it. In fighting as with football, those boys that particularly enjoy an activity and are good at it will spend more time ensuring that they are engaged in that activity. They will create insitutions where this is possible. The way the boys talk about them, it is fairly obvious that the fights between, say Newcastle and Sunderland supporters are only incidentally about football, and more about the mode and structure of the activity of fighting compared to its perceived alternatives. You bash up the 'Maggie supporters' not because Newcastle play a better game of football but because the alternatives are not at all exciting. This explains the way in which the fights are 'real' and 'not real' at the same time. They MUST be convincing to create sufficient feeling as an activity, for if the boys know its a con, then they also know they are not fighting. At the same time 'you are still mates' even though the boot is really put in. In a 'real' fight the boys know that they really get hurt, but 'real fights' depend upon 'real grievances' that might occur when Sunderland are

beaten 4-0 by Newcastle. This, however, does not happen every Saturday, so the boys manufacture sufficient disagreement to create fights and excitement. One could hypothesise that the Municipal gang throw milk bottles at the South Hylton gang because they are defending their 'territory'. If the boys are given a chance to talk about fights in the context of 'Saturday bother', it remains typically an activity, a created activity created in the knowledge that the alternative is very likely; nothing.

Obviously it is not totally unimportant that fights occur around the issues they do. In the Shankill road area of Belfast Tartan gangs wearing 'their uniforms of denims' (Observer 4.6.72; page 1) attack the British Army and any Catholics in range. It is important that they don't stone the British Army in the name of a United Socialist Ireland, but it is incorrect to say that the cause of the gangs is the fear of the <sup>Catholic</sup> ~~Protestant~~ Community of North Ireland. The Tartan gangs were there before 1969, they are the creation of the Northern Ireland situation but that situation affects them more than in an ideological/religious sense. The intractable problem for the British Army in Ulster is the problem that the alternative to throwing stones at the British Army is, not throwing stones at the British Army and, to in fact, end up bored on the streets.

Similarly with football, the content of the 'gang warfare' is not unimportant but can lead us to misunderstand the situation. The content of the fighting comes from a much deeper cultural involvement, the important concerns of working class culture, i.e. 'the fucking Fenians' in the Shankill; the bloody Troops in the Bogside, and the apparently perverse ascendancy of Newcastle Football Club

<sup>over</sup>  
in Sunderland. No boy can possibly grow up ignorant of these vitally important areas of life.

A fine example of the content of fights is a full scale riot that happened to take place in the precincts of Municipal School during the period of the research but was unfortunately not observed by the researcher. The basketball team of Municipal School went to play at Tavistock School inflicting several injuries upon the opposing team. The school basketball team was manned by players who believed that you should 'play basketball dirty'. After the game, the whole of the fourth year of Tavistock School roughed up the basketball team as a reprisal for the injuries. The next week the Tavistock basketball team had to come to Municipal School to play the return fixture. Word had gone round about the previous battle and after the game (a similar rough-house won by Municipal) the whole of the fourth year of Municipal was waiting around the school gates to repeat the beating up handed out by Tavistock School the week before. However, what one boy described as the 'whole fucking school' (Billy) turned up from Tavistock to defend their team. A full-scale bundle ensued. It would be ridiculous to posit this fight as 'hooligans driven by loyalty to the school basketball team' (basketball hooligans) yet this WAS the context of the fight. The school had provided the issue, loyalty, provided the easy differentiation of the two sides (uniform) but this could never be seen as the cause.

Any fight then whether between two boys, two gangs or hundreds of people has a meaning and importance, that is only intelligible within the alternatives available to the boys. The content of the fights tends to reflect, for the most part, traditional concerns of the cultures that the

boys grew up in, rather than anything that they create. This would explain the ambivalence of the working class community as a whole to the content of fights in working class youth. In football, the gangs of skinheads ARE good supporters, but are still hooligans. In protestant North Ireland the Tartan gangs are good loyalists, but are hot-heads.

### Getting into Trouble

As was suggested above, the boys experience of spare-time does involve contact at some time with the police. Most of the quotes from the boys have already mentioned getting into trouble. My discussion of street corner activity has attempted to show the important factor of the street; it also shows how the street provides, if anywhere does, a 'natural' area for group activity. Therefore given the police attitude to the street (i.e. historically they are there to keep the streets safe) that they see the street as the natural area for their activity then there will inevitably be interaction between these two discrete groups. The meaning of the interaction for the boy is vital to any understanding of how boys get into trouble.

It is possible to hypothesise that the reason that the boys get into trouble is that trouble provides excitement. That they are aware of the 'ban' on street activity that is created by the police ideology of order in the street and that it is this awareness of 'ban' that creates the impetus for street activity. In the boys terms, 'getting into trouble' is the reason for 'knocking about on the street'.

The hypothesis that I would put forward to account for getting into trouble of this kind is different in emphasis. It posits an experiential naivety on the part of the boys with regard to the police ideology of order on the street.



The boys are on the street for all the reasons outlined above - summed up by the phrase 'we stand on the corners because there is nowhere else to stand'. In other words the street is the culturally perceived place to spend spare-time irrespective of police activity. Indeed as I have shown it is perceived as being one of the places **freest** of social control, and allowing the greatest amount of freedom. It is, however, precisely these activities that are most noticeable for the police as being possible infringements of order. I am not saying that the boys take part in a range of activities and that the police clobber them for some of them; rather they spend most time on the street, just 'knocking about', and it is precisely **THAT** activity that is disliked by the police. For as we have seen knocking about does consist of activities that are nearly all rule-breaking, playing footy in the street, fighting, smashing things, getting 'weird ideas'; though they are not activities entered into because they are rule-breaking but because they provide diversification and excitement. It is only on introducing another powerful group, the police, that the idea of ban enters and then as an institution that implements this idea through power rather than through a set of common values.

It is only this basic naivety about the work of the police that would account for the persistence in both the activity **AND** the surprise at the intervention of the police. The surprise and indignation is not a feigned expression but pervades nearly every mention of police activity, with regard to these boys. There seems to be no feeling of 'legitimation' given to the police interference in the boys actions, no feeling of a 'fair cop'. This reflects very strongly the model of control in the

school, where there was no real recognition of the moral or legal rights of the teacher to interfere. Similarly with the police, the only way in which their rights of interference are recognised is through their power and that is recognised like the teacher ONLY in his physical presence. This puts a different gloss upon Matza's <sup>22</sup> 'Techniques of Neutralisation'. For, while he is right in saying that the activities are not committed as acts of rebellion or ideological commitment to wrong, neither are they committed despite the banning of them. The events spoken about by these boys are intelligible only through a very real indignance that the activity is banned by police power. Matza's boy saying that lots of people do it, is not necessarily apologetic, rather he is simply stating the obvious as he sees it. For these boys there is no common rationality that says what would happen if we all smashed telephone boxes or milk bottles, because nearly everybody does. It is not that they are ideologically committed to street corners, to playing footy or to smashing things, rather these are the things that he does; he does them against a backdrop of doing nothing. Then the police come along and move you on. The concept of ban does not occur in this situation.

The power of the police is seen as virtually total by the boys, and this perception is backed up by studies of the police (Lambert 1970; Skolnick 1965) which stress the arbitrary nature of the police power at this level of interaction. This, coupled with the complete lack of understanding of the workings of the court system (Dave Woodhill 1972), it is correct to say that the power of the policeman~~t~~ is seen as total; he can hit you, put your name

in the book, put you on probation or in an approved school away from your home and mates. It is this power that gives police activity its importance for the boys rather than any common idea of ban. Activity on the streets is carried on with this power in mind, a power that does not let you play football, stand around, smash things or fight, though not necessarily with any glimpse of the law or of the set of ideas behind police activity. The police, like the teacher are a group of people with power that do some very strange and arbitrary things, their power is massive and has to be coped with, if not obeyed. Like the classroom, the methods of coping with individuals with power are many and varied, like giving wrong names and addresses. Whilst the boy has to go to school to cope with the teacher, there is a lot more choice contained in the creation of this situation and it is important to outline the boys perceptions of how they get into situations of trouble.

"Do you ever knock around the streets?

Ian - Sometimes.

What happens?

Ian - Sometimes we have a panda around us for playing football or something like that.

What?

Ian - Well you know just hanging around minding our own business.

What happens then?

Ian - Well er (laughs) you've got to run.

Do you like playing footy?

Ian - Well you see where we play football, like behind the shop, the people that live above the shop complained then the panda came round."

"What do you do on an average Saturday evening?

John S. - Saturday night we sometimes go out and play footy like. Though it depends whats on the telly. But most Saturdays we just walk about.

What sort of things do you do when you walk about?

John S. - Just talk.

Does anything else happen?

John S. - Nothing much, we keep moving about all the time so someone can't complain.

Complain?

John S. - Well people complain and we get into trouble, not for doing owt but for just standing about."

"What do you do when you hang around?

Martin - I spend most of me time in me mates home. Sometimes we go fishing. On the streets we just stand around in groups. Doing lots of things on your own, but you can get into trouble there.

Trouble?

Martin - Yes the police don't like you just hanging about.

Why?

Martin - I don't know."

"Do you ever just knock about the streets?

Jimmy - Yes that's what we do every day.

Do you ever get into trouble?

Jimmy - Yes, I was getting into trouble for playing inside a club. I was getting picked up by the police. It's just because we were on the premises and they caught us.

What else?

Jimmy - Sometimes when you're fighting you get caught by the coppers.

How does trouble start?

Jimmy - Well, we were just playing football, minding our own business and police will come up and argue with you. Sometimes they'll hit you and sometimes they'll just take your name."

The boys see trouble as something connected purely with the police, or other social control agents; one cannot get into trouble without the presence of one of these groups. At no stage do they perceive it as doing wrong, or breaking rules. Indeed the question 'Why?' asked about getting into trouble is a question only to do with the presence of the police rather than any rules or morals. This must be linked with the naive entry into 'trouble', for if indeed they do just walk around the streets, what rules are they breaking? What wrongs are they doing? If they just walk around the streets and the police harass them then the reasons for the harassment lies with the police and NOT inside any rules that the boys are breaking, since for the boys the streets are a 'natural' meeting place. Indeed this perception of the boys does agree with another analysis based upon a historical interpretation about the role of the police as clearers of riff-raff off the street. The role of the police and the role of the education system are paralleled here, because they are both attempting to change the styles of living of people that already exist, and are seen as threatening by ruling groups within society. Whilst this may appear similar to Lemert's original formulation about primary deviation, it does attempt to locate interactionist ideas in a specific view of the State as an organisation attempting to attack and change styles and behaviour that are not in themselves deviant.

In general, with regard to the whole trend of research

in deviancy, this would lead to a shift from what appears to be the motive force of deviance, i.e. the juvenile delinquent, the truant and the schizophrenic to the initial motive force of the interaction, as planned by the police and the law, the education system, and the psychiatrist.

The boys experience of the interaction between themselves and the police is an attempt by the police to interfere, and this attempt is interrupted only through the power of the police and the law, and not through any belief in the validity of the moral rules and laws that the police interpret.

Thus there were boys who had left their groups (who had walked around the streets) because they kept on getting into trouble.

"What do you do on an average Saturday evening?

Dick - At about 1 o'clock the Rink starts, and I sometimes go. If I dinna go there I go down the girls house.

What do you do down the Rink?

Dick - I just sit down and walk around.

Do you ever knock around the streets with your mates?

Dick - I used to. We used to, about three or four months ago we used to go up the Park Gates and we used to carry on and that. The park keeper used to come every night and chase us. Sometimes we used to stand on street corners and then the police would come and chase us.

Why?

Dick - I dunno but it go so they knew us and kept on picking on us.

What did you do on street corners?

Dick - Police never saw us do anything wrong, so they

shouldn't pick on us. But we just used to play about.

Sometimes smashing things you know.

What sort of things?

Dick - Anything really. I dunno why. Just ideas people had.

Why did you stop knocking round?

Dick - It got dangerous."

This interview chronologically encapsulates the process of getting into trouble that is described by different boys in different ways. The important point for theories of delinquency is the attitude prevalent towards rule-breaking, i.e. that, whilst it is true that rules are broken in smashing things, and whilst the boys stop this activity when they come into contact with rule enforcers, the breaking of the rule is not one of the major parameters of the action, not the reason for the dropping of the action. Rather it is important to understand the locus of experiences (i.e. knocking about in groups on street corners doing nothing) that the activity is part of. In short deviancy is NOT 'only epiphenomenally action' (MATZA) it is essentially action and only epiphenomenally infraction. The action is a result of cultural milieu, the rule is a result of powerful groups forbidding that action: thus, the essence of the rule-breaking activity is not to be found in the action itself, but in the ideology behind the rule-makers and the rule-enforcers.

Similarly with Dick, stopping to 'break the rules' on the streets, he stopped not because smashing things had become defined as wrong by him, but because the power of the police was recognised as being against that activity. It is important to note that he did not simply stop smashing things in the street, which is all the police in law

could stop, but he stopped all activity in the street, This very sensibly recognises the police ideology that is against all youth activity in the streets, it recognises that any group of boys walking around the street are breaking the rules, rather than those that smash things, alone. In these circumstances it is not possible to expect boys to have a clear perception of what rule-breaking activity is, as compared with non-rule-breaking activity; for the police will harass you if you are 'doing nothing' at all.

Under these circumstances it is possible to say that most juvenile delinquency undertaken by these boys is, experientially the result of certain parts of actions that they consider culturally unremarkable. However, these activities are forbidden by powerful groups that exist outside of that cultural milieu. If we are interested in rule-breaking activity therefore we cannot simply pull out those activities so labelled by the outside world and say that they are either a causally valid or an experientially valid group of activities for the boys. For them, they go out on the streets, and are met by 'the coppers' who stop them from taking part in certain activities. It is with the power of the police that the idea of infraction or rule-breaking emerges into the activity.

### CONCLUSIONS

What then is it possible to say about the spare-time activity of youth in Sunderland, and how does this relate to the activities that are labelled delinquent?

The theme that runs through this section relates to ways of understanding these boys actions. I have levelled criticism against previous studies for using categories of



thought from outside of the boys experience to make sense of that experience. This is not a moral point but, rather represents a critique of a certain methodology. I have tried to show that this methodology then inevitably leads to results which need some further concept (for example a lack of socialisation) to make sense of the boys actions.

Most importantly though these categories of thought ~~that~~ have been used in the past to make sense of spare-time activity have been very closely linked to some of the boys experiences of being pushed around. For example, the criminologist's use of the category delinquent and non-delinquent does not simply mis-represent the way in which the boys themselves may view action, but it is closely linked as a category to the police view of viewing these boys. Thus misinterpretations of boys behaviour with these categories are not on a random basis, rather they tie in at a conceptual level with the misrepresentations of the actual forces of social control.

In place of this method of analysis and in keeping with some of the theoretical premises outlined in Chapter 1 and 2, I have claimed and backed up by evidence from the boys that working class culture does provide a way of understanding spare-time activity different from that of the sociologists. That this method of understanding provides us with a coherent structure that shows that the boys experience conflict with the police on street corners in a naive way (that is they have no prior conception of law). This type of attitude to street corner action grows up completely APART from bourgeois IDEAS about LAW, morality and structured leisure. The boys then come into conflict with these IDEAS as they are transformed into powerful institutions. .

The boys DO interact with institutions outside of working class culture and this interaction takes three different modes, depending on the three different sorts of institutions. The Evangelical institutions intervention into the boys life is negligible since the boys can ignore them owing to their voluntary nature. Those boys that attend them, are more likely to have some very specific orientation to that institution and its goals. For the others, the whole structure of the organisation acts as a distinct threat to them since they perceive it either as trying to change them or as entailing a regular structured set of activities which they feel does not fit in with their culture.

The commercial institutions come into contact with working class culture by means of a cash payment for a service. These services, mainly either watching football or going to a dance allow certain amounts of freedom for the boys in their behaviour, though there are limits on this. Nevertheless, football grounds are perceived as significantly different from institutions such as youth clubs because no one is trying to change the way in which you think. In terms of the two spectator spare-time activities emphasised by the boys, football and dance-halls, these institutions were felt to be very important.

In terms of activity organised by themselves the boys perceive something like football in very different terms from the game that they saw at Roker Park. Kicking a ball around constitutes a major activity which is related only in a tenuous way to the football of league and international status; rather it represents a group activity that is free and can be carried out on the streets. The streets are the main place where spare-time is carried out,

and 'hanging about' or 'doing nothing' constitute the main activities. This apparent lack of direction and its existence on the streets leads the boys into contact with the police and with rules and laws. Also hanging about is the activity which through the medium of 'weird ideas' leads the boys into direct conflict with the police and being labelled as delinquent.

This research and these conclusions, however, must be considered with one large proviso. The 'delinquent activity' that it was investigating and that it has discussed has been that activity furthest from the boys perceptions of 'law'. Shoplifting and stealing cars etc. would need a different piece of research with a different set of methods to make sense of them. I claim no theoretical insights into activities that I have not discussed in this chapter, indeed to do so would be to implicitly recognise the importance of the category delinquent that brings playing footy on street corners; 'having a scrap with some Maggie supporters' and breaking and entering a bank; into the same theory of human action. The whole aim of this chapter is to try and discuss the set of actions that it has discussed in terms of the boys own categories of thought. This may mean that I have left out the whole category of stealing; which may indeed detract from the research. Given the theory and methodology, this however, could not be helped.

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## CHAPTER 5

### THE PROBLEM OF FUTURE WORK

INTRODUCTION - ANOMIE\$ TO ASPIRATION	292 - 309
BOYS' PERCEPTION OF THEIR JOBS	309 - 327
BOYS' PERCEPTION OF 'OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE'	327 - 342
LACK OF AN ILLEGAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE	343 - 344
BIBLIOGRAPHY	345 - 346

INTRODUCTION - ANOMIE TO ASPIRATIONS

Having looked closely at the two areas that are important to the boys present set of experiences, I also felt it was important to look at that experience which, even though it was in the future, could be thought to impinge upon their present. This is the problem of future work.

The problem of 'careers' or 'getting a job' or as it is most commonly known 'aspirations' is one that occurs in many writings about working class youth. The problem of 'blocked aspirations' as formulated by Cloward and Ohlin (1960) in its clearest form, has been seen as playing a major part in the aetiology of delinquent behaviour. As a consequence this chapter will deal with those aspects of the research that bear upon the boys experiences of their future work, and the relationship, if any, that this has with their present action that is labelled delinquent.

However, to come to terms with a body of theory that stretches so far is no easy matter, especially as it represents both a philosophical view of man as well as a sociological theory that attempts to make sense of social 'facts'. I will try to deal with the set of ideas in two ways, firstly to criticise them theoretically, by showing their partial view of the working class world and secondly by showing the distance between their formulations about the importance of aspirations, and the importance of aspirations to the boys in the study.

The gap between aspiration and expectation has to a large extent represented the modern formulation of anomic theory in deviant behaviour. Clinard's (1964) opening chapter in *Anomie and Deviant Behaviour*, starts boldly with Plato and Hobbes but by Page 10 is embroiled in the

empirical means/ends discussion that takes up much of the remaining 300 pages. Even though much of the discussion of anomie theory has been mediated through this empirical form it still remains important for anyone hoping to cope adequately with this concept to return to Durkheim's wider set of ideas concerning anomie. This is not necessarily to follow up a conceptual family tree but also allows us to see many of the wider considerations of the aspirations argument that are never explicitly mentioned after Durkheim.

Since Durkheim was primarily a social theorist rather than a sociologist interested in a particular area of sociology, it is not surprising that his theoretical ideas are much more fully spelt out than any of the more recent writers to be discussed. For Durkheim 'anomie' was the outcome of a failure by society to restrain the ambitions created in man for,

'human activity naturally aspires beyond assignable limits and sets itself unattainable goals'

(DURKHEIM, 1951; 247-8)

This view of man leads Durkheim to view the best state of affairs in society as being one where these unbridled passions are regulated through a series of institutions that provide collective order. It is important to quote him at length.

"On both sides nations are declared to have the single or chief purpose of achieving industrial prosperity, such is the implication of the dogma of economic materialism ... industry, instead of being still regarded as a means to an end transcending itself, has become the supreme end of individuals and societies alike. Thereupon the appetites thus excited have become freed of any limiting authority.



Such is the source of the excitement predominating in this part of society, and which has thence extended to the other parts. There the state of crisis and anomie is constant and so to speak, normal. From top to bottom of the ladder, greed is around without knowing where to find ultimate foothold. Nothing can calm it, since its goal is far beyond all it can attain. Reality seems valueless by comparison with the dreams of fevered imaginations; reality is therefore abandoned, but so too is possibility abandoned when it in turn becomes reality. A thirst arises for novelties, unfamiliar pleasures, nameless sensations, all of which lose their savour once known. Henceforth one has no strength to endure the least reverse. The wise man, knowing how to enjoy achieved results without having constantly to replace them with others, finds in them an attachment to life in the hour of difficulty. But the man who has always pinned his hopes on his future and lived with his eyes fixed upon it, has nothing in the past as a comfort against the present affliction, for the past was nothing to him but a series of hastily experienced stages." (DURKHEIM, 1951; 255-6)

The similarity of both phraseology and concepts to much of present-day common-sense ideas does not need to be stressed. Durkheim's contrast between the ephemeral activities of anomic man and the steady capabilities of a man who does not suffer from this strain is total.

"For loving what he has and not fixing his desire solely on what he lacks, his wishes and hopes may fail of what he has happened to aspire to, without his being wholly destitute. He has the essentials.

The equilibrium of his happiness is secure because it is defined, and a few mishaps cannot disconcert him." (DURKHEIM, 1951; 250)

The familiarity of the contrast between these two pictures is an important point. For Durkheim was in this part of his work contrasting the society of his day with the peaceful, fulfilling years of the past, he was characterising his own society's troubles as being due to a lack of moral regulation over runaway ambition. It is therefore of significance in understanding the staying power of this philosophy to see that Clinard, immediately before quoting the distraught analysis of 1890s France commented that "Durkheim seemed to describe more the present than the society of his day." (CLINARD, 1964; 7) It is this similarity that provides anomic theory with its breadth. As far as America in the 1960s or Britain in the 1970s is concerned, it does 'seem to describe the society of the day'. The recent attacks on the concept of growth seems to represent but one reaction to this growing materialism and national ambition. The greed of unions and business alike, always reaching beyond the means of the nation, always being disappointed and left bitterly frustrated after another bout of industrial unrest.

As far as sociologists' explanations of delinquent activity are concerned, anomie theory has been very badly butchered by its adherents. For most sociologists interested in delinquency and anomie only a cursory mention of Durkheim is given and Merton tends to be seen as the most important anomie theorist. Merton was concerned to talk about anomie in a more specific way and therefore almost inevitably has avoided the nuances of Durkheim's theory in exchange for the opportunity to operationalise a concept and to make it sociologically useful. There were a

number of obvious and admitted differences between their formulations. Most importantly Merton attempted at the very start of his paper to remove the anomie tradition from Durkheim's biological necessity.

"There persists a notable tendency in sociological theory to attribute the malfunctioning of social structure primarily to those of man's imperious biological drives which are not adequately restrained by social control. In this view the social order is solely a device for impulse management. Non-conformity is assumed to be rooted in original nature." (MERTON, 1936; 672)

Therefore Merton was attempting to take the original impetus for behaviour away from the area of innate impulses and straight into the social area, he was concerned to discover how some social structures exert a pressure upon certain persons in a society to engage in non-conformist rather than conformist conduct. His search for social structures led him to make two important dichotomies in his analysis. Firstly he divided social reality into cultural structures and social structures. The cultural structure is 'that organised set of normative values governing behaviour which is common to members of a designated society or group'. The other element, the social structure, consists of institutionalised norms which define and regulate the acceptable mode of reaching these goals. This represents an organised set of social relationships in which members of the society or social groups are variously implicated. The cultural/societal dichotomy therefore hardens into a goals/norms dichotomy that characterises his work.

For Merton the culturally defined goals 'comprise a frame of aspirational reference' and the structurally

defined means regulated and controlled the acceptable ways of achieving these goals. Merton's major explanatory notion was derived from the hypothesis that different societies put different amounts of stress on each of these two analytically distinct factors and that American society in the 1930s put much importance on the frame of aspirational reference, the goals. He hypothetically created the polar case where there was a virtually exclusive stress upon the value of specific goals, that involved relatively slight concern with the institutionally appropriate means of attaining these goals. In this society any and all devices which promise attainment of the all important goal would be permitted. He also posited the other polar case where the emphasis was put totally on ritualistic adherents to traditionally prescribed conduct. Then finally, like Durkheim, there was the idyllic equilibrium picture where the balance between goals and means were perfect and are "significantly integrated and relatively stable, though changing groups".

Merton assumes that rates of deviant behaviour within a given society vary by social class, ethnic or racial status and his explanation of behaviour and deviant behaviour in particular hinges on the validity of the proposition that the inability to achieve the goals of society by institutionalised means will be differentially distributed through the social system. This varying access to institutionalised means, when accompanied by a universal pressure to achieve certain goals, will lead to innovations of non-institutionalised means to achieve those goals.

As has been suggested already Merton confined his analysis of deviant behaviour to those societies like the Americans, where certain goals tend to be stressed without

a corresponding emphasis on institutionalised procedures to obtain them. American culture was characterised by great emphasis on the accumulation of wealth as a success symbol without a corresponding emphasis on using legitimate means to march towards this goal. However, this imbalance between cultural goals common to all and institutionalised means open to some was not, in Merton's analysis, of itself sufficient to analyse the high frequency of deviant behaviour among certain classes in American society. A more rigid structural system of means, such as a caste structure may restrict opportunities to achieve such goals even more, without resultant deviant behaviour. The crucial difference in American society is that of egalitarian ideology.

"It is only when a system of cultural values extols, virtually above all else, certain common symbols of success for the population at large while its social structure rigorously restricts or completely eliminates access to approved modes of acquiring these symbols for a considerable part of the same population, that anti-social behaviour ensues on a considerable scale. In other words, our egalitarian ideology denies by implication the existence of non-competing groups and individuals in the pursuit of pecuniary success. The same body of success symbols is held to be desirable for all. These goals are held to transcend class lines, not to be bounded by them, yet the actual social organisation is such that there exist class differentials in the accessibility of these common success-symbols. Frustration and thwarted aspiration lead to the search for avenues of escape from a culturally induced intolerable situation, or unrelieved ambition may eventuate in illicit attempt to acquire the dominant values. The American stress on pecuniary success and

ambitiousness for all thus invites exaggerated anxieties, hostilities, neuroses and anti-social behaviour." (Merton's stress)  
(MERTON, 1938; 679-80)

This then represents the really radical part of Merton's thesis, for he is saying that anti-social activity is not only caused by a disjunction between goals and means, between the aspirations of the working class and the reality, but that it is the failure of the American society to live up to the democratic egalitarian ideology that causes the deviant activity.

There are three areas where I would like to take issue with the notion of frustrated aspiration as a causal factor in delinquent activity, all of which I would later like to substantiate with data.

Firstly, Merton assumes and indeed stresses that the goals of American society are those of every member of that society. He goes further in that he suggests these goals are not simply far away dreams for all Americans, but are everyday signposts for human action and as such inform the day-to-day activity of all Americans. It will be remembered that there was some confusion about the unit of analysis for Merton, is it groups or societies? And it is clear that this part of his work is meant to apply to the whole of American society. Indeed he stresses many times the importance of these success goals is that they are common goals, held by all members of society. If this were not so, if they were only held by, say, the richer half of the society, then the other half would not strive for goals that they did not hold. Therefore their behaviour would not be greatly affected by them. In this way Merton replaces Durkheim's simplistic biological abyss of ambition by a

series of cultural goals that everyone in society is striving towards. In America these goals were money, wealth and success itself. For Merton's theory to hold together these goals must not simply be mildly adhered to by the members of a society but must be of paramount importance, since it is in frustration at not achieving these goals that creates the 'anti-social' behaviour. I would suggest that this is a misconception on two major counts, firstly because Merton takes it for granted that what he perceives as the 'goals' of everyone in American society are in fact common to all members. I would argue that the goals that men aimed for in the America of the 1930s were much more diverse and culturally specific than Merton allows for. All the goals represented by cultures had been created at least in part as solutions to the problem of structured means of attaining goals. In other words their cultural aspirations were affected historically by their chances of achieving certain goals given their structural position. The black in the south thought little of one day being president or of following Henry Ford because his culture had been formed as a direct response to certain structural positions, none of which were anywhere near Henry Ford's workers let alone Henry Ford.

Merton's original cultural/structure and goals/means dichotomies are brought into question. Cultural goals are highly specific and are formed at least in part by the structural limitations put upon the individuals in their historical situation. The Cabin boy to President model could only have been held by those individuals to whom it had direct relevance.

The second criticism at this point is that Merton has a too simplistic view of the relationship between ideology

and action. His ready assumption that his views of American cultural goals are those of every American is followed by the equally questionable assumption that, given adherent to these goals, they are constantly acting as goals for action. It is quite possible, for example, to hypothesise that these goals will affect the individual's action differentially at different times, and at some times will have no direct effect. This is not to argue that unless individuals are constantly conscious of a goal that it doesn't affect their lives, but that the multiplicity of cultural goals does lead to some having more effect on men's action at certain times than at others. Thus it would not be sufficient for Merton to show that all Americans have aspirations for monetary wealth, for him to show that this common goal was important to him. For example, one could ask the question, Do you want to be rich? and get a 100% answer yes, but one would not understand how important that goal was in the person's whole life, nor would one understand the implications for action for the individual.

Finally, and crucially, it is important to discuss Merton's stress upon the egalitarian ideology as the all-important factor in the creation of delinquent activity. What Merton calls "our egalitarian ideology" refers again by implication to the ideology held by every individual in American society. (One is left to imply this as he fails once more to limit the unit of analysis by concept other than 'our' or American). He also fails to discuss, once more, the effect of this ideology upon the action of the individuals involved. In short he believes not only that every American believes that he has an equal right to become rich, famous and successful, but that he gets



angry and frustrated when this god-given right is denied him. Once more simple validation of this proposition by the question, Do you believe in equality of opportunity? is not sufficient. One must show how that belief affects the actions of the individuals, if at all. Merton's idea that every American believes he has a right to rise is indeed naive. At no stage does he attempt to provide us with a theory of where this ideology comes from or how it is discriminated, though he does in a note admit that:-

"The shifting historical role of this ideology is a profitable subject for exploration. The "office-boy to president" stereotype was once in accordance with the facts. The ideology largely persists, however, possibly because it still performs a useful function for maintaining the status quo. For, in so far as it is accepted by the 'masses', it constitutes a useful sop for those who might rebel against the entire structure.

(MERTON, 1938; 679, footnote 15)

Leaving aside Merton's assertion that this ideology was once 'in accordance with the facts' he still believes that it is a guide-line for action for all Americans. This is why it is important to fully see where that ideology comes from, for if, as Merton suggests, it is being used by 'society' (in Merton's functionalist analysis) or ruling class (in a Marxist analysis) as a representation of a series of events that are far from reality, then surely it must become questionable whether people would use it as a guide-line for action. Again as with the notion of 'goals' of American society, Merton fails to appreciate the interaction between the individual black's world view or ideology and his structural position with all its limitations on action. In short, what I am questioning is whether the

mass of the American people really expect the abstract concept of equality of opportunity to affect their concrete day-to-day activities and, more importantly to the aspiration theory of delinquent behaviour, whether the 'frustration', or 'anger' or 'neuroses' generated by not being given equality of opportunity in their day-to-day activities is sufficient to lead them to anti-social behaviour.

Cloward and Ohlin (1960) are the aspiration theorists who have used their theory in the particular area of deviant activity that interests this study, namely delinquent activity by juveniles. Their theoretical formulations go into more detail about the aspirations of young Americans and at the start of their chapter on aspiration theory they justify looking at 'Goals, Norms and Anomie' in the following terms -

"In this chapter we shall be engaged in a search for causes. What pressures lead the young to form or join delinquent subcultures. To what problem of adjustment is alienation from conventional styles of life a response ... It should be borne in mind that (in this chapter we shall be concerned) with the question of the problem of adjustment to which delinquent behaviour is a response." (1960; 77)

Their major refinement of aspiration theory is to offer a series of distinctions between different kinds of aspirations. Most importantly, they talk in terms of limited aspirational goals for different sections of the population. They justify this idea simply by referring at length to "An acute observer of the American scene, Alexis de Tocqueville, (who) remarked on this point a century ago, and there is no reason to assume that his observations are less true now" (sic) (CLOWARD and OHLIN, 1960; 84) De Tocqueville's point was that Americans were all characterised

by ambition and that this ambition does not mean that all Americans want to be president but that they are "all seeking to acquire property, power and reputation, few contemplate these things upon a great scale."

(DE TOCQUEVILLE, 1958; 256)

The hypothesis about small-scale aspirations is backed up by empirical work by Empey (1956) and Hyman (1953) though Cloward and Ohlin admit that "We have little evidence regarding the heights to which Americans typically aspire". These two studies showed that in an absolute sense the aspirations of upper class Americans are higher than those of lower class Americans but they both stress that the degree of relative occupational aspirations decreased significantly with each upward step in the social scale. From this it was concluded that persons in the lower reaches of society experience a relatively greater sense of position discontent despite the fact that their absolute aspirations are less lofty.

Cloward and Ohlin continue by outlining the barriers to success for the lower class adolescent, but their main stress is upon the problems of adaptation for the lower class adolescent male caused by their position discontent. Like Merton they lay stress upon the increased frustration caused by the egalitarian ideology and end their casual chapter thus -

"We suggest that many lower class male adolescents experience desperation born of the certainty that their position in the economic structure is relatively fixed and immutable - a desperation made all the more poignant by their exposure to a cultural ideology in which failure to orient oneself upward is regarded as a moral defect and failure to become mobile proof of it." (CLOWARD & OHLIN, 1960; 106-107)

Like Merton's these are indeed radical ideas, but at no stage do they fully discuss the importance of the egalitarian ideology to the adolescents or its implications for delinquent action.

This represents the main stress of sociological aspiration theory and whilst it is obvious that there are major differences between the position of Durkheim and Cloward and Ohlin I hope that the arguments presented show the similarities that are inherent in a theory of aspirational frustration and delinquency.

Whilst A.K. Cohen is not explicitly classified as an anomie theorist, much of his theory depends upon a conception of status frustration similar to the position discontent spelled out above. Cohen's theory has been fully spelt out elsewhere, but it is important to appreciate the differences between his conception of status frustration and Cloward and Ohlin's ideas. Basically the frustration that Cohen points as the cause of delinquency is caused by day-to-day denigration of the status of a working class child vis a vis the middle class world around him. This is to be contrasted with the occupational aspirations that represent a much more fixed set of criteria for Cloward and Ohlin's formulation.

The criticisms of Cohen's belief in the internalisation of middle class norms is mentioned elsewhere but the assumption is important here, for this day-to-day denigration that leads to status frustration can only occur if the working class youth has at some time held the status goals that he is now being denied. As Cohen puts it -

"In the status game, then, the working class child starts out with a handicap and, to the extent that he cares what middle class persons think of him or

has internalised the dominant middle class attitudes toward social class position, he may be expected to feel some 'shame'."

This precisely sums up Cohen's case. It is ONLY to the extent that the working class child has internalised the middle class norms that his conception of status frustration affects the adolescent's action. Unfortunately at no stage does Cohen delve into this crucial point further, except to admit that it is little researched. This is unfortunate because this assumption on Cohen's part, like the assumption of common goals in Merton's and the common belief in egalitarian ideology of Cloward and Ohlin creates a series of values that everyone judges their actions by. This is referred to as the middle class measuring rod. Like Merton and the others, Cohen's theory is radical since he points to the unfairness of society judging working class children by middle class values but he also claims, without evidence, that the children themselves judge their action, achievements and standing by these same standards. It is the fact that they fail in the standards that leads the children to reject the standards altogether, indeed to reverse them in the creation of a delinquent subculture.

Before entering into a discussion of the data itself it is important to restate the way in which the study has been carried out. At no stage is the chapter looking for a causal model for delinquent behaviour, rather it is interested in the part played by 'delinquent' activity in working class male adolescence, and what part the school plays in this complex experiential process. Consequently I will not be talking in the data in a way that is at all similar to any of the theorists that I have discussed in this chapter. Rather I will discuss the part played by

occupational aspirations and expectations in the whole life style of the male working class fourteen year old. Thus there is an admitted tension between the theorists discussed in this chapter and the method of organising the data - a tension made inevitable by the whole methodology of the thesis.

This tension arrives by attempting to relate the way in which previous studies and theories have looked at both aspirations and delinquency with an approach which may well leave any reader feeling that this data invalidates its own existence. This is because the data claims that aspirations and expectations are of little overall importance for the boys when compared to the <sup>data in the</sup> preceding chapter. Thus the rationale of this chapter's existence is contained in the previous section which shows the importance for the sociology of delinquency of aspirations. For my own data I not only claim that it shows no causal link but that it eradicates any chance of the existence of such a link both theoretically and substantively.

Thus Cloward and Ohlin ask questions about careers in terms of an expected link with their questions about delinquency. My data not only invalidates this but shows the relativity of the concept of 'careers'.

However, even though this may appear a negative rationale for one chapter of six in a thesis its importance is in its attempt at a dialogue with these other sociologies. For these other sociologies are powerful and it is insufficient to discuss them as not applying to this country because of transatlantic differences in culture (especially with reference to the ideology of equality of opportunity), since the ramifications of the theory are many. Even in such writers on delinquency as Mays (1954; 1962), who is by

no means within the 'anomie' school of delinquency theorists, uses the ideas of aspiration-frustration within his analysis. Thus the tension within this chapter is set up by the importance placed on aspirations by sociologists in contradiction with the lack of importance placed on aspiration by the boys in my study.

Indeed as mentioned above the boys whole conception of 'future work' differs from that of sociologists who have looked at aspirations. What I have suggested in chapter 2 was that the ideas and values of working class adolescents is an aggregation of the solutions to problems of the working classes. This is as true in thinking about work as education or leisure. Unless this is taken into account it is possible to fall into the general difficulties specified within the following quote:

"The fantasy choices of these boys are at a distressingly mundane and realistic level, the majority rarely leave their immediate world."

(MUSGROVE, 1964; 17)

This expresses surprise (and a little moralistic judgement) that the immediate world of these lads has an all-pervading effect upon their aspirations. Would Musgrove have been similarly surprised in an anthropological study to discover that few Aborigines wanted to be airline pilots? Probably he would assume that the culture of the Aborigines and the white Australians were sufficiently different for them to have different patterns of aspiration. However, no such difference is assumed in this society because it is believed that everyone somehow 'knows' that there is a set of choices for jobs that ranges from sewer-man to managing director of I.C.I.

This leads to a whole variety of methodological mistakes

an example of which is a study by Liversidge (1962). He delivered a questionnaire to boys which had questions which gave them an absolutely 'free choice' of jobs. He seemed to expect that these words would somehow enable the boys to cast off their immediate world and grasp the wider horizon of the opportunity structure as seen by Liversidge. The data is then analysed as if the boys had the same conception as Liversidge, yet given a free choice means given a free choice within the frame of reference of the culture of the individual answering the questions NOT a 'total' free choice. Thus the boys 'horizons' become the 'horizons' of the questions.

Another point that effects this study is that for the working class boy the concept of 'choice' may not be an applicable one to the field of job finding. As I will argue later on in the chapter, a Sunderland boy does not choose a job so much as ends up in one. Thus you are asking a person to carry out an unfamiliar conceptual exercise (at least unfamiliar with regards to this area) from a range that for you might stretch ~~over~~<sup>over</sup> a massive range of jobs, but for the individual concerned may cover only a very small range. It is to the composition of this range and its creation for the boys in Sunderland that we now turn.

#### BOYS' PERCEPTION OF THEIR JOBS

All the information taken from these adolescents was taken in the year before most of them left school. For some of them, particularly in the pilot study, there were only a few days left of school before they left. It is at this stage that they were given their greatest impetus by school, home and their culture to think in terms of their



future. Therefore it is here that one would expect the aspirations of these youths to be most important to them. Maizel's (1971) study claimed that it was just before leaving school that the greatest amount of pressure was put upon them by the school authorities to think about their future. Indeed since three-quarters of the boys questioned in the present study said that they would be glad to leave school, one would expect the boys themselves to be thinking of their life after school. Especially so since 62% gave reasons for wanting to leave that could be classified as pro-work (as against the 15% anti-school reasons). However, despite these internal and external pressures to make their occupational aspirations an important part of their lives, the overall impression given was not one of importance to these boys. With certain exceptions, their answers to the questionnaires and discussions in the interviews did not show any overall picture of occupational aspiration - or of thinking very much or very often about their jobs when they left school. There was almost no mention of the process of work itself as an important reason for leaving school, rather most of those who mentioned work as a reason for leaving school specified the rewards of work, mainly of money.

Typical answers were -

"To get some money in my pocket" - Peter

"I will be bringing money in and helping my family" -  
Arthur

"I can go out to work, get money and enjoy myself" -  
Dave

"When you're working you have your own money instead  
of pocket money from your parents" - Harold

Therefore the concrete results of getting a job when

you leave school are those that can be imagined at this moment in time; the money in your pocket. Indeed the word pocket, when linked with money, is a concrete one for these fourteen year olds. It is not money in the abstract that they want, but more of the sort of money that they experience now. The whole process can be summed up in two answers.

"I will be glad to leave school to earn a man's wage that will result in more pocket money for me" -

Duncan

~~Interview~~ (Paul D.) - "Well I would like money so that I can get some more clothes and that and so that I can go places with my friends."

Unfortunately, since this study was dealing with boys still at school, unlike Downes (1965) who was looking at both young workers and school pupils, it was not possible to really come to grips with the meaning of 'work' in any concrete experiential sense. This is an important omission since the effect of the cultural ideas about the meaning of work generated by elder brothers and older friends would greatly effect the way in which these early leavers felt about the change from school to work. For example the problem of future work would be different if the boys expected their work to be interesting or expected it to be boring but financially very rewarding, or alternatively they expected it to be boring and badly paid. Goodman (1962) sets up a series of alternative views of work by adolescents, and all that one can say about these and other paradigms is that this research did not uncover any set of expectations that could be classified in such a way. This either means that I was not asking anywhere near the right questions, or as I will try to show the expectations about the problem of future work are not simply classifiable

because they are NOT part of a planned set of ideas about the future.

In this question I was not specifically interested in obtaining information about the meaning of work. Instead I was asking about the prospect of leaving school, yet it is in this area that the boys thought also about the 'reasons' for working.

If we contrast this with a later question "People do different jobs for different reasons. Which of the following do you think is the MOST important about any job you do?" it represents a different sort of data. In this question I was presupposing that people do jobs for various reasons and that they select their employment on this basis. The concepts of 'reason' and 'choice' both do not necessarily play any part in the actual experience of getting a job for working class youth. Why then ask the question at all? Because the answers given by the boys cannot be dismissed as useless, but they must not be viewed as representing the real way in which these boys go about getting a job. Instead they represent the particular ideology that the boy has created from those available to him, which is related to the question that they might occasionally ask themselves, "Why do people work?". When actually working these boys will phrase this question more personally (and probably more brutally) "Why the hell do I do this job?". This allows us to say that in the situations where these boys are called upon to justify their work either to themselves and others, they will use these sorts of formulation. This is not an unimportant factor for, whilst the boys may not use these 'reasons' for 'choosing' a job in their experience, they do have an effect upon the way in which they think about work.

If the answers given to the above question did in fact represent the reality of finding work in Sunderland for a 15 year old, then we would expect to find a positive correlation between the reasons for doing a job and the jobs chosen. Also, if the person's reason for doing a job was promotion we would look at whether he expects to leave his job or not and the reasons he will leave it. Thus I asked a series of questions in the questionnaire,

What work do you expect to be doing?

Do you think you will be doing this job all your life?

If you will change it, what to? and why?

People do different jobs for different reasons. Which is the MOST important? (interesting, well paid, friendly workmates, promotion)

If you could choose any job, what would you be?

Sometimes we all dream about being things we know we shall never be. What do you dream about?

All of these questions do in fact represent different areas of the reality of "thinking about jobs" for the fourteen year old. The prospect of leaving school is not enlivened by going out to work as much as actually getting more money to spend; in these boys' minds work does not contain anything intrinsically attractive. None-, for instance, specified that they want to leave school so that they can get out to work - by itself. Yet 29% say that the most important reason for doing a job is that the work must be interesting - indeed of these half said that they wanted to leave school for the money. If we were to hypothesise that these boys had a constant attitude to the meaning of work then this represents a contradiction. Yet, as we shall see there are a whole series of contradictions that run through the whole of the boys answers, contra-

dictions which are only surprising if one assumes that there is a concrete set of occupational aspirations for these boys. There is no hard and fast plan for the future with these boys that has been carefully reasoned and chosen. If there were then we would expect to see a consistency between the individual answers to these questions that does not exist in most of the sets of answers. There could be several reasons why this does not appear in the data. The hypothesis that I will put forward is that the concept of occupational aspirations and expectations is one that cannot be used with working class boys. The relationship between working class boys and their employment is a very different one.

What work did the boys expect to be doing in their first job after leaving school?

Professional	8
Skilled	24
Unskilled	29
Services	17
Don't know	15

No. = 92

The difficulties of comparison with other data has already been mentioned but in this case it is even more difficult since the aim of this study is to talk about working class boys rather than the general picture of 'careers'. All that we can say though is that there seems to be a larger number of boys entering the services than in any other study (Maizel's data suggested 2%) and a smaller number expecting skilled manual and non-manual work. Both of these characteristics are entirely explicable in terms of the working class culture of employment opportunities. Indeed the recruitment for the Army

and Navy represents a strong tradition in Sunderland, a tradition that is strengthened by two major factors. Given the unemployment in the area, and the boys' consciousness of it (about half the boys (48%) said that they thought it would be difficult for them to get a job) the boys expecting to join the Army are taking the traditional working class way out of an unemployment situation for single men. Traditionally the services have always recruited better in periods of unemployment, a factor that both the working class and the services themselves are aware of. When I moved to the North-East I was immediately struck by the amount of recruiting done by the Army and Navy every July and August. All the big towns in the area have large numbers of tanks, field guns, etc. in strategic places at this time of the year. Thus the 'choice' of the army or Navy by these lads is affected by these structural and cultural factors that are interplaying on one another. The rise in unemployment reduces the 'choice'; the Army advertises more in areas of unemployment; parents and relatives talk of the Army as a good job when there's little else going; the Army advertising stresses learning a trade, etc. Given these alternatives the fact that there is a higher proportion of boys going into the services is not surprising.

The lads that expected to go in the services were generally the exception to the diffuse aspiration model I've outlined. Most of them knew why they expected to join the services and in most of them in interviews showed a number of familial or other links with the services that had first attracted them. The most extreme case -

Interviewer - Why do you want to join the Army?

Robert - Well, just that I've been going down the

Army cadets since I was two and even me mum used to carry us down when I was about one and it's just that I've liked the Army ever since, and what with taking cookery at school I just fancy the catering Corps. It's also where you can get better qualifications.

Interviewer - What sort of things do you like about the Army?

Robert - Well it's the action and that.

Interviewer - Even in catering?

Robert - Even in catering there's action.

Interviewer - Do you want to get promoted?

Robert - I might be getting a stripe already.

In his answers to the questionnaire this lad gave a consistent set of answers that represented why he wanted to go in the Army. Promotion was his reason for selecting a job. He chose to be an Army Officer out of all his visions of the job market. It is a case like this that we can see the ideal typical set of choice mechanisms - rational and coherent - that past studies in working class occupational aspirations have taken to be the real and total picture. Yet in these Sunderland boys at least, this picture was limited to those going into the services.

This direct link between family and expected job is probably present with most of the boys. Vennes (1962) and Maizels (1971) use three major categories in analysing the reason for employment preferences - inner directed, other directed and tradition directed. (They do have another, residual category called uncertain choice). Since our sample of boys come from a working class background many more of them would fall into Vennes's "uncertain choice" than in her own study for, as Maizels points out -

"Some school leavers, particularly from the homes of manual workers, had been uncertain as to their abilities and interests and apprehensive as to whether they would like or be suitable for certain kinds of employment."

However, Venness and Maizels try and put all the cases into one category or another, whereas it would seem more likely that with the boys in our study all three of the 'pressures' had some effect on the eventual expected employment. The tradition-directed choice was the one that seemed most evident but it is impossible to separate this since careers masters obviously know some of the boys' backgrounds and are likely to advise him to go in for something in that line. Similarly they will advise him to try for jobs that he appears suitable for (other-directedness). And lastly his interested and personal capabilities (inner-directedness) will be affected by his parents and neighbours' jobs (tradition-directed). So it seems a senseless task to wrench one of these three areas from the other two. All we can do is point to the sort of ideas that seem to influence the expectations of employment. Given the overall thesis that employment expectations do not follow a logical hard fast rational pattern, it becomes very difficult, given the sorts of cultural interactions mentioned above to pick out any obvious factors for a causal analysis. Indeed those individuals that selected professional, skilled, unskilled or services jobs did not have any major statistically significant correlations with the rest of the data. Again the picture is one-within the cultural limitations - expecting to get a particular sort of job mainly by a chance configuration of family, careers and traditionally known job opportunities in the area. Thus this 'chance'



expectation is not a random chance but one structured by the boys' immediate environment. For example, one boy said -

Arthur - "At first I always wanted a job where I was an electrician but my dad says that there is not much money there and there is a man that said that he would give us a job with his firm (he owns his own firm now) as a plumber, and me mum says that every week I have to pop round and see him."

Interviewer - Are you interested in the money or the job itself?

Arthur - Well both really. I'd always wanted to be an electrician but me mum said that there was more money in plumbing and I could serve my time as an apprentice.

and another boy

Interviewer - Have you got a job?

Brian - I've been down to see about going to the pit but I don't think I will. I want to get away from school but I want a decent job. I'm not bothered how hard the work is I just want the money.

Interviewer - When I came to the North-East I was surprised at the number of boys joining the Army. Have you ever thought of joining the Army?

Brian - About three weeks ago in careers I was reading about the Royal Navy and it said that you didn't have to have qualifications to get in, so I took an address down. I told me dad and he said "It's no good asking your mother she'll not like the idea. You could ask to join the Army but she won't let you go in."

So its no good asking her."

Here we have two cases of boys who, it must be remembered, are at most five months away from leaving school, expecting a different employment after only one additional piece of information. In both cases we can see the effect of mum upon the process - this is not to say that mum is a determining factor in the process of working class adolescent job expectation, but that her word in these cases is the word of the 'expert', i.e. it is not to be questioned. In the first case we have a lad who has wanted to be an electrician all his life, someone who we would therefore expect to have a deeper commitment than most to his job expectation, being prepared to change it because his mum says that there is more money in plumbing (which does not necessarily represent the true position of the average wage for these jobs).

At first sight the answer to the next question would appear to contradict the theory that job expectations are not deeply committed for most of these lads since 48% answered Yes to the question, "Do you think that you will be doing this job all your life?" (42% answered No, 10% did not answer). If one were to analyse these responses in terms of middle class mode of career it would look like a very high commitment. However, there are other alternatives that make more sense of this and the other data, which again shows the effect of working class culture upon the job expectations and aspirations. For the next question asked, "If you think you will change your job, why will you change it and what to? these answers were classified thus -

Why change?		What change to?	
Fed up/bored	17	Same level	20
More money	11	Promotion	8
Better job	4	Change to 'star'	
		e.g. footballer, pop star	5

Miscellaneous	12	Don't know what to	11
Don't know why and		Won't change	48
won't change	48		

When confronted with a life time at the same job - and these jobs, it must be remembered, are not the type of job where one is given increments every year, or where there is a career structure to work one's way up - only four boys out of ninety-two said that they would move <sup>in order to get</sup> to a better job. 20% of them specified that they expected to change because of the boring nature of the work. This was said with varying degrees of confidence. "I will get sick of the same thing" - Motor Mechanic (Brian M.); "Because you get sick of it" - Roland - a boy who expected to be a P.E. teacher; "Because I'll probably get bored" - Bert - engineering; "Because it would drag on and on, the same old thing" - Steven - factory workers; "Because I will get sick of it" - Chris - change from Navy to a baker; "Because you might get fed up" - John - painter to a shipbuilder; "Because I might get sick of one job, the first job I come to" - Pat - Merchant Navy to van boy; "Because you get sick of it all the time" - Tim P. - woodworker to footballer. For nearly all of these boys, therefore, the expectations of changing their jobs does not represent occupational mobility in the sense of rising up the social status scale, nor does it represent any expectation of increase in wealth or change in life style.

For most of them there are expectations of a lifetime in the same job and for those that do shift will be doing it for an increase in wages or a touch of variety. Again we get a picture of no expectations of job satisfaction, or career trajectory in any way. Instead we see what has been described as the instrumental working class attitude to work or alternatively the expectation of alienated labour.

Either of these two paradigms represents the actual working classes experience of the labour market since the industrial revolution. The instrumental cultural attitude to work is just a result of the alienated structural position, as is evidenced by the increasingly instrumental attitude of middle class employees now that their work is becoming increasingly alienating. (GUEST, <sup>SILVERMAN</sup>, 1971)

If we look at the expectations of what their jobs will change to, we get a similar picture. Not one of a career ladder, but one of horizontal change, as far as the Registrar General's classification is concerned. The change from shopfitter to sheet metal worker, or postman to bus driver shows once more the lack of any conception of career patterns or aspirations.

The question already mentioned about reasons for choosing jobs represents a different part of the occupational situation of these boys. The answers were as follows -

The work must be interesting	29
The job must be well paid	39
My work-mates must be friendly	2
There must be a good chance of promotion	17
No answer	6

(92)

These answers show the different proportion of adherence to cultural 'reasons' for doing jobs. There is little evidence in most of the cases to say that these are reasons in the sense of the word that implies antecedence or choice, but rather that they are reasons in the sense of cultural justifications for engaging in certain forms of employment. This latter interpretation is supported by the cross-tabulation of these answers with others in the

job expectations, aspiration area. Thus of the 17 boys who specified promotion as the reason for choosing a job, only 4 chose a job that was a promotion from their expected job. Also 6 of the boys who specified promotion actually chose the same job as they expected. On all the other questions on aspirations these questions about 'reasons' for choosing jobs have no significant relationship. For example, of the 17 who specified promotion as reason for 'choice' 5 expected an unskilled job. This would support our hypothesis that the model so far used in sociology to talk about the job market for working class youths is one that, on closer analysis, does great violence to the reality for these boys.

If we look at the results of the 'choice' questions that others have used then the answers need not be so surprising if we realise that the question, "If you could choose any job what would you be?" can only mean a choice confined completely to the boys' experience of what 'a job' means. The answers were coded in the following way -

Same as expected job	27
Same level as expected job	11
Promotion from expected job	23
A 'star' job	15
Services	2
No answer	15

An immediate interpretation of this table is that it seems to support the blocked aspirations thesis, i.e. that there is a group of boys (40%) who have a disjunction between their wishes (their choice) and their expectation. Of this group of 38, however, we find that there is no real grouping in the other aspirations questions. Thus they split 47-53% as to whether they expected to be doing their

job all their lives.

<u>Expected job</u>	Same as 15 (38) Same level as 15	Promotion (38) Star job
Professional	6	2
Skilled	10	10
Unskilled	12	12
Services	9	6
Don't know	1	5

Will you do this job all your life?

Yes	24	16
No	14	17
No answer	0	5

Reasons for choosing a job

	Same as 15 Same level as 15 (38)	Promotion (38) Star
Interesting	11	17
Well paid	16	11
Friendly	1	1
Promotion	7	8
No answer	3	4
	38	38

So, statistically, we cannot isolate a group of malcontents who are either lower down the 'expected' scale of job or higher up, nor do they expect to change their jobs more often, nor do they justify employment for any particular reason. If we look in more detail at the individual answers though an even, <sup>more</sup> fragmented picture emerges. Of those that chose a job entailing promotion two groups emerge, those who chose promotion within their expected job (Agricultural College to race horse trainer - Derek M.; bakery - cook - Dave; Army - General - Tony; Engineering

officer - higher grade of engineering officer - Frank) and those that chose a job that entailed a rise in status outside of their expected job (motor mechanic - a potato business - Brian M.; plumber - Naval architect - Arthur; marine engineer - architect). The 'star' choice splits fairly evenly into brain surgeon, footballer and miscellaneous. Now these groups all obviously have vastly different sorts of meanings attached to their answers, and it is these that are the important data. For the group who chose promotion in their own job, their 'expected' job did in fact represent for them the first step to their 'chosen' job, so there was no real feeling of frustration at the aspiration/expectation gap. For the second group ( a group of 9) there does seem to be some real gap between the job that they choose and that which they expect. Indeed 4 do not know what job they expect to get.

Crucially as far as the argument about blocked opportunities leading to delinquent activity is concerned, there is no evidence whatsoever to lead one to suppose that this group is at all frustrated or annoyed by any disjunction between job expectancy and job aspiration. Equally so this group at no stage and in no area engage in any more delinquent activity than their less ambitious counterparts. They represent as far as deviant activity both inside and outside the school is concerned, a typical group.

Those that chose a 'star' job, rather than one requiring promotion, require a different set of culturally specific explanations. The number of people talking about brain surgery as a choice is surprising, especially so when one considers that no other medical job was ever mentioned. However, there is an explanation totally in terms of the boys' own culture. In the Daily Mirror there is a strip

cartoon about schoolchildren called the Perishers. Featured in this cartoon is a character called Marlon who, despite constant attempts by friends, parents and teachers to persuade him to the contrary, keeps saying that he wants to be a brain surgeon when he grows up. Marlon is portrayed as being very stupid and this occupational choice is seen as confirming his stupidity. Thus the mention of brain surgeon must be understood in this cultural milieu. The choice of footballer represents a much longer standing cultural goal of working class youth, and I was surprised at the fact that it was so little mentioned, especially so in the North-East that sees itself as the nursery of so many great footballers.

To conclude this part I would like to reiterate some of the points made earlier. Firstly, it is of paramount importance NOT to transfer the model of a career from one's own experience to that of the working class youth. It is only possible to make sense of their job expectancies if viewed in the light of their own experience and their own culture. If this is not done then the sociologist will almost inevitably achieve results which characterise working class youth as deviating from a careerist model that would have applied to himself. Since the number of deviants in this case is so high, since the model is a class based model, then a series of explanations are necessary to explain it. The researcher will also be constantly surprised at the 'mundane level of choices' of jobs since he is working with his own perception of the labour market, with his own perception of choice. This mundane level has to be then explained. In this way the results and explanations of most of the studies of careers are caused by

the initial misconceptions about the way these boys live.  
 1 The Perishers of course may well also be reflecting a working class joke about 'thick' people wanting to be brain surgeons.



Secondly, there seems little validity in creating a classification system, as Venness and Maizels have done, of reasons for choosing employment, when we have already called into question the very structure of 'reasoned choice of jobs'. If we look at the usefulness of these classifications when confronted by an empirical case, we can see their limitations. For a classification of 'reasons' can only work where these reasons are concrete parts of the process that actually leads to expected employment. In the case of inner directedness, outer directedness and tradition directedness, these reasons cannot be thus classified, not simply because the labels are of no use, but because there are no real reasons to be classified. The answer to the question, Why does a boy end up in a certain job? is part of a process and as such it must be the process that we try and understand. To simply ask the boy for a reason, classify that reason and believe that you have classified social reality, does great violence to the way in which the boys experience the process of thinking about and eventually getting a job.

The important methodological point can also bear repeating, namely that the researcher is always at fault if he expects an isomorphic relationship between a respondent's words and his actions. This is assumed throughout most of the research on job aspirations and is a major mistake. In the area of work, more so than in the areas of leisure activity or school activity, there is a very distinct form of action to be taken, i.e. getting a job, that can be assessed as meaningful by the individual boy. For him it is an experiential truth, a part of his way of life, that he will try and get a job. In short, it is almost inevitable. There are no 'reasons' that he can articulate

for this inevitability that have anything like as much force for him as the experience itself. Any reasons or words articulated by these boys MUST be viewed in this light, merely as clues, as slight openings to action and more importantly to the experience of that action. To do otherwise is to create a reality of words that are always at a distance from the boys' experience of the world.

#### BOYS' PERCEPTION OF 'OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE'

One of the major difficulties of the interpretation of the data arose from an attempt to understand the boys' conception of how certain people managed to procure certain jobs. This was an attempt to come to grips with the Merton (1938) and Cloward and Ohlin (1960) theory that claimed that the egalitarian ideology led to an increased frustration on the part of the failures. As was commented above, I was sceptical as to whether this ideology actually had any real impact on the way that these boys made sense of their day-to-day experience.

In the questionnaire the boys were asked - "In Sunderland there will be lots of boys leaving school this year. They will be doing different sorts of jobs. Why do you think some of them will get better jobs than yourself?" The question was an attempt to replicate a real situation for the boys to put themselves in. As such it was a question that in a sense pushed the boys to express feelings of bitterness at those who were getting better jobs. The same question was asked in the interview. Analysis of the meaning of the answers is difficult, but observation of the boys throughout the research process showed this to be one of the most 'trying' questions in terms of thinking things out, especially in the interview.

Of the answers to the original questions in the questionnaire, 29 simply stated qualifications in one form or another - They might have 'O' levels, 'A' levels (Tom); If they have any certificates (Doug); Because they might have G.C.E. or C.S.E. (Douglas); Better qualifications (Charlie P.). Another 20 mentioned 'O' levels combined with one other variable; they are more brainy than us and they have better qualifications (Frank); They might get better jobs because they might be better with their hands and might have qualifications (Arthur); More 'O' levels and personality (Adam); Because they might have levels and took it in when they were at school (Charlie); Because they are lucky and are qualified (Billy); Because some of them have stopped on at school for an extra year and got qualifications (Steven). The next largest category were 10 who put the capture of better jobs down to being more brainy; they might be more brainy (Derek); All depends if you are brainy enough (Bruce). Another category, in a very loose sense, was 11 answers that could loosely be called working class explanations; Because they looked earlier for a job (Jimmy); I think they will (get better jobs) because some of their dads work at the firm what they are going to and their dads will get them the job (Fred S.); Because they left before any of us and stand a better chance than us (Stan); Because they will have got a better report (Laurie); Because I will not go looking (Tim P.); Because they will be lucky bastards (Dick). There were 9 miscellaneous answers, of which two specified the type of school that the boy went to; because they might come from a different school like Bede (Pat); Because they are more educated (Will); Because they will be better suited for the job (Tim); It depends on the manager of that certain job (Barry). A further 5 gave no real causal

answer but all reflect a set of interesting ideas. Yes, they get better jobs than us (Pete); Some might ... and some might not get a job (Tom P.); I do not know if they get better jobs. I cannot help it (Doug C.); Yes ... and some might not (Roland); No, it should not be right if they get a better job than every other boy (Harry). (A further 8 did not answer the question).

All of these answers in some way reflect the experience of the boys and the ideas with which they have been provided to make sense of the job market. The overwhelming mention of qualifications (49 out of 84) does of course reflect both the experiential answer to my question and one of the ideologies that the education system uses to encourage work. If you look at any page of Situations Vacant adverts in the Sunderland Echo or you pick up any of the books on careers in the careers room, you immediately see that there is a list of qualifications for a job. Seemingly too, within the boys' own experience, the jobs that ask for the more qualifications are the jobs that provide the most money. Therefore if someone asks, why do some people get better jobs, then the answer is obviously, qualifications.

However, the meaning of the answer in terms of the boys' 'aspiration frustration' is a more difficult matter. For example, the boys could all realise that the best jobs go to those with better qualifications, realise that they had their chance to attain those qualifications and did not, and become angry at missing their chance. Or they could believe that they never had a fair chance, that in fact the best jobs were never open to them, because they never had a chance of a good education. The second of these would accord with Merton's egalitarian ideology argument.

I have characterised the education system in 3 running on the carrot and stick principle of delayed gratification that tries to encourage the boys to achieve a high number of qualifications by pointing to the increased opportunities in the labour market. In this way it hopes to help maintain order within the school and, importantly, encourage people to work harder and stay on at school. The high number of boys who mention qualifications as the reason for getting a better job would appear to lead us to suppose that this ideology has been successfully transmitted to the boys in their fourth year.

There might, however, be an alternative explanation. In asking exactly the same question in the interview there were very few replies that succinctly named qualifications as the reason and even these do not fit the carrot and stick principle. There was, however, one fine example of a boy who had taken in the ideology of qualifications very well.

Interviewer - So you think that the important thing about school is the amount of study you get in.

Robert - Especially for the jobs as even in shipyards you need C.S.E.

Interviewer - There are lots of boys leaving school in Sunderland this year. They will all be doing different sorts of jobs. Why do you think some of them will get better jobs than yourself?

Robert - Well some people that leave school might have C.S.E. and some might have nothing. There's only one job that I know of where you don't need C.S.E. and that's in a veterinary hospital. All the

others you need either C.S.E. or G.C.E.

Here is an example of the boy speaking from his own experience of looking at job vacancies - 'there's only one job that I know of' - and irrespective of whether this represents the real situation or not, this is the way that the boy makes sense of that part of the world known as the labour market. He goes further than the others because he links the question of qualifications with that of the day-to-day school experience in the way that the educational ideology feels is important. However, even in this isolated case, the simplistic ideology of the teachers - work hard - qualifications - good job - money and status - only remains in a state of ideology for the boy. For, as far as he is concerned, with his experience of the school, this simple causal chain does not work.

Interviewer - Why do some boys in Sunderland get better qualifications?

Robert - Some boys get better qualifications cos they understand the work more easy than other people. Such as in maths, I might be able to get a few right but I can't understand it. It's just the way different teachers explain it.

Interviewer - Why is it that you can't get the idea in maths, is it because of the teacher or is it because of you?

Robert - Well last year when I was in 3H2 the teacher was Mr. Haroldson. He wasn't going mathematical all the way. If you couldn't understand anything he used to change it to English or something like that. But now, with 4A1 with Mr. Willaby he sticks mainly in mathematical

terms cos 4A1 is just like the groupe he had last year except for about 4 people.

Thus there is no feeling that he has to of necessity, work hard in order to get these qualifications that will lead him to his "better job". Indeed this boy was going to enter an apprenticeship for a cook and then join the army catering corps. He wasn't staying on at school and was going to leave without qualifications. The causal chain of work - qualifications - better job - money and status as an ideology that he felt explained the world, did not explain his world because Mr. Willaby stuck to mathematical terms which meant that he had no chance at all. There's no anger at Mr. Willaby but an acceptance of a reality over and above the ideology.

There are, however, much better illustrations than the above to answer the question of what the boys mean by, "better qualifications lead to better jobs."

Interviewer - In Sunderland why do you think some of them will get better jobs than yourselves?

Jimmy - I dunno. I suppose its because some of them are swots and that. Some of them don't have toys and that and they stick in at their work at night.

Interviewer - Why do some boys in Sunderland get better qualifications than others?

Jimmy - Most of them are swots and that. They stick in at the work and that. They stay on at school and get good exam marks. While some others just like a bit of fun in class and don't bother about school.

Here we have a description of what happens in this boys' experience of school. It seems to him that the boys who get

better qualifications, get better jobs and the boys who stick in on the work get the better qualifications. In this way he describes the process of delayed gratification. Throughout this and a few other descriptions like this in other interviews, it is nearly always a simple description of fact and never a prescription for his action. The question, "why don't I stick in ~~at~~ my work?", doesn't seem to arise - it's just that other people seem to be able to do it and I don't.

In another case, the causal chain of hard work to money and status was broken by the experience of the boy's brother.

Interviewer - Why do some boys get better jobs than yourself?

Eric B. - Might be for qualifications, you never know. Some might not get a job at all.

Interviewer - Why will some boys in Sunderland get better qualifications than others?

Eric B. - I don't know ... My brother took G.C.E. and left school a year later and he couldn't get anywhere. He couldn't even get a job. He's got one now. I'll probably follow in his footsteps.

Interviewer - Are you staying on?

Eric B. - No, I'm going to leave.

Interviewer - Lots of boys come back to school in September if they can't get a job. Would you do that?

Eric B. - No.

Here is a boy whose family experience has cut across the ideology and his prescription for action would appear to be following his experience rather than the ideology.



The fact that some boys manage to work in school and some do not is a thing that as far as these boys' views of the world go, seems to be of little choice. You are either a swot or you're not and nearly all of these are not. The language they use to talk about this is indicative.

Interviewer - Why will some boys in Sunderland get better qualifications than others?

Dick - Well some have to go out at night and they can't do their homework. They get behind in their work and then when they start to revise sort of thing they don't revise enough because they haven't got it all there.

Interviewer - Are you going to stay on?

Dick - I'm leaving at the end of term.

People have to go out at night and this stops them doing their homework. This in turn means that when they revise chunks of the syllabus are missing. The element of choice about whether you do the work or not is very limited.

Interviewer - Why will some boys in Sunderland get better qualifications than others?

Bert - I don't know that they do.

Interviewer - Well, you know, some boys will get 'O' levels and some won't.

Bert - Well, you mean some will not get on. I think if they stick in at school. Then again some of them are a lot better at learning.

Interviewer - Are you leaving.

Bert - No, I'm stopping on.

Interviewer - What do you want to do?

Bert - I haven't thought about it really. It all depends how I do in the exams. If I get real good marks I'll stop on until the sixth. If I get crap ones I'll probably leave.

Here is the largest element of choice of any of the boys. He may stop on but it depends on the exam marks, NOT on him. The exam marks will determine whether he is one of the people who are a "lot better at learning". The amount of real motivated action left to an individual in this situation with this world view is very limited. However, none of these cases represents the more typical answers in the interview to these two questions and it is these answers that throw most light upon the school experience and aspirations of these 14 year olds.

This can but be introduced through an interview with a boy who directly quotes the causal link ideology of hard work - qualifications - more money, but sets it against his experience and then goes on to say that the latter will determine his action.

Interviewer - Why will some boys in Sunderland get better qualifications than others?

Arthur - It's because they want a better job and more money and they must like school cos they have to stay on to get better qualifications.

Interviewer - Are you staying on?

Arthur - I might but I don't think so.

Here we have the single most important factor about qualifications, you have to stay on to get them. It is here the element of 'choice' comes in. In many other interviews the answer to the question, Why do some boys get better qualifications, is simply because they stay on.

Experientially the boys have seen that those that do stay on an extra year do get C.S.E. and G.C.E. and therefore the answer to the question, why better qualifications, is simply the staying on.

Interviewer - Why will ... better qualifications than others?

Dave - Probably because they stay on another year, and don't like to gang out with lads who are working.

Interviewer - Why will ... better qualifications than others?

William - Cos most of them stop on until their fifth year.

and most, simply,

Interviewer - Why will ... better qualifications than others?

Tom - Because they wanted to stay on and get better qualifications.

Thus, given that the boys seem to recognise that better qualifications lead to better jobs in a simple cause effect way (indeed in a much simpler way than education-  
alists might claim who would surely include some element of 'intelligence' or 'hard work' in their analysis) why then don't they take this opportunity for better jobs by staying on at school for that extra year. For these lads recognise that you only stay on at school (and get better qualifications and better jobs) if you have a certain relationship to the institution. If you experience it as an institution where you work and learn then it is possible to stay on, but for most of these boys there is no chance of staying on, because, experiencing the school as attacking them, they feel it is not possible to spend another

year there. Thus they have no real hesitation in refusing the inevitable 'better job' and leaving as soon as they can.

One of the lads put forward an analysis of qualifications that would seem less bizarre to the sociologist.

Interviewer - Why will ... better qualifications than others?

Steven - Well, some of them have got big families and they have to get out to work and earn money, but some of them have got fairly small families so they can stop on and get G.C.E. and that. So if you can afford to stop on you get qualifications. I'm going straight into the R.A.F.

This reflects a much more acceptable, more rational ideology, for it talks in terms of economic motivation and responsibilities - rather than the seemingly 'irrational' reaction of the boys above who "know" that it's better for them to stay on, in terms of their future, but nevertheless decide against it. Nevertheless this still only represents an ideology rather than a personal explanation of experience or a personal prescription for action.

Another boy talked in terms of very interesting variations on the idea of staying on causes qualifications, by positing in between the two factors a third one.

Interviewer - Why ... qualifications than others?

Edward - Well like it's just because they stay on at school. Then they take more interest in school and they get more qualifications and all this.

Interviewer - Are you going to stay on at all?

Edward - No, I'm leaving.

He puts forward the idea that the staying on for the extra year changes the quality of the relationship between the boy and the education system. This action represents a more 'rational' view of action. If you stay on, the investment of time and energy will change the boy's view of the work process and he will become more committed and therefore more interested, therefore his work will improve and he will attain qualifications. However, once more it remains a description rather than a prescription for action.

In this way the boys saw the attainment of better qualifications NOT as a result of a greater innate intelligence, but simply as a result to staying on another year. Consequently the anger that writers such as Merton seem to expect from these boys at either their 'natural' or 'social' disadvantages was not felt. Within their own cultural terms it was very different, they simply could not stick school for another year.

The discussion about qualifications was an attempt to come to terms with the boys answers in the questionnaire when asked about the differential access to 'better jobs'. It was suggested that the answer to the 'better jobs' question that was given to me in terms of 'better qualifications', was a description of an experience that the boys must get whenever they have glanced at a situations vacant column. In these columns it is obvious that those people with better qualifications have a wider range of jobs. In the interviews, however, there was an attempt to go beyond this simple causal answer, though interestingly exactly the same question was asked. In the interviews a much smaller number mention qualifications at all (20%) and the two greatest sets of answers mentioned were those that

mentioned father's influence (25%) and those that mentioned other experiential factors (30%).

Interviewer - In Sunderland why ... better jobs than you?

Edward - Sometimes it's because their Dad works there and that their Dad gets them in because they know the head man and all that.

Interviewer - In Sunderland why ... better jobs?

Dick - Some lads have their fathers in the job and he is a big influence in the job and he'll put a good word in, and they might be daft as a post but they'll still get a good job.

Neither of these boys had any influence in either of their prospective jobs, but another boy had experience of the usefulness of influence in finding a job.

Interviewer - In Sunderland why ... better jobs than you?

Arthur - Cos these might be more brainier and their fathers might already have their names down and their fathers might have a good job at that firm that they've wanted. Or they've got friends. Cos my friend - his Dad's one of the best friends to the foreman and he is going to get me mate a job already.

Here again we have the description of a process that explains the different sorts of opportunity structure. With none of the boys is there any mention of the feeling that it is not fair that some people have influence and some have not. There is an acceptance of the fact that

that is the way that the opportunity structure is ordered. Once more we see the distance between Merton's and Cloward and Ohlin's formulation about anger at blocked opportunity structure, and the reality of these boy's experience.

The biggest group of explanations, about the opportunity structure, from the interviews, can be collectively labelled 'vigilance'. In these explanations the important cause why some people get better jobs is the closeness of the individual to the market situation. It is here where the choice enters again into an ideology of opportunity structure.

Interviewer - In Sunderland this year ... lots of boys leaving ... why some better jobs than you?

Derek - I dunno, they might prepare things before they leave. You know, go around before they leave and have everything ready cos if you don't do that you always just have to get any job that comes.

Interviewer - In Sunderland ... lots of boys leaving... Why some better jobs than you?

Frank - It's because some people just don't care what sort of a job that they get. Or they might get a tea boy's job or something like that and they say, "Well, I've got a job, and I'm sticking to that until I get the sack." and they just go on like that. It's a bad life really. But the others, who go out searching for good jobs, if they got that job I think that they would not be satisfied and

they would go on until they were satisfied.

Basically, if you look early and you keep looking, then you get the better jobs; whereas if you just don't care then you end up with the worst jobs. This explanation reflects both the ideology of the working class towards the opportunity structure, and the boys' experience of their parents and others' experience of the labour markets. Historically if you want a job at all in times of unemployment then you need to be in constant touch with the labour market by going to the Labour Exchange; keeping reading the papers' Situations Vacant columns. Similarly in times when employment has been at all difficult, unless you spend a long time looking for a job - unless you join the 'cattle market' at the shipyard - you end up with the worst job. This is the dominant message that the boys' working class cultural background will give them about the labour market. It is also backed up by their experience.

Interviewer - In Sunderland ... lots of boys ...  
better jobs than you?

Bert - There's a lad called Richard Kelly who  
didn't bother going down the Youth  
Employment or watching the papers to see  
what jobs were in. He just didn't want  
a job. Some of them are going and trying  
to get a job all the time.

In this vigilance to the labour market though there are some boys that start out with a perceived advantage. These are not the boys who went to better schools, etc. that Merton et al claim that working class boys believe have got an advantage, but it is those boys that are simply born between September and April and can therefore choose to leave at Easter. In real terms these boys have an advantage over their friends who leave in July. As one



boy explained -

Interviewer - In Sunderland ... lots of boys ...  
better jobs than you?

Steven - Some will be looking at Easter and  
they've got time to get a job whereas  
when the main batch leave in the summer  
there will be five people going after  
each job.

This then is the experiential reality of the opportunity structure for these boys. At no stage in either the interview or the questionnaires do they reach out from their class backgrounds and use a comparison with themselves that is away from that background. There are no comparisons at all with boys that go on to University or become bank managers or any other middle-class employment. Whilst all the questions are deliberately phrased to include comparison with everyone in Sunderland, ALL the answers are phrased in terms of the working class of Sunderland. This brings into question a whole range of ideas, not only the sociological ones of the aspiration theorists, but also the more commonplace ideas that class barriers are being broken down by the media or by increasing affluence.

Not only is there no direct comparison by these boys between their jobs and the jobs of people outside their experience, but there is also no application of an ideology of opportunity structure that comes from outside their experience and their class's experience of the reality of the opportunity structure. Any notion of 'egalitarian' ideology is never referred to. These boys' worlds are ordered by experientially tried and tested means of understanding the world, even though these may appear irrational to the outside observer.

LACK OF AN ILLEGAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE

Having tried to show the different way that it is necessary to look at the opportunity structure of these boys, it is important to discuss briefly Cloward and Ohlin's other idea about that structure, namely the illegal opportunity structure. Downes mentions this in his study,

"The ultimate criterion for the existence of a criminal opportunity structure in an area must be that such a structure has a separable existence as an institution within that area. By this criteria Stepney can hardly be considered a criminal area and Poplar even less so. While there are in the East End several well known (to the police) criminal cliques, and families of a 'professional' nature, i.e. solely engaged in the utilitarian pursuit of 'break ins', robbery and drug trafficking, these groups are largely independent of each other and are not organised in such a way as to constitute a visible, coherently patterned criminal opportunity structure on a quasi-bureaucratic basis, as are the big American syndicates ... The adult set-up is naturally reflected in the structure and aims of adolescent delinquents among whom there are very few groups dedicated to deliberate and positive criminality, and these are almost certainly composed of boys with much Approved School and Borstal history". (DOWNES, 1965; 208)

This led Downes to say that there was a lack of any perceptible aspiring towards professional crime amongst adolescent delinquents.

These areas of Sunderland were even more lacking in an adult organised crime opportunity structure. The boys in this study were all, obviously, outside of institutions

such as Approved Schools and were too young for Borstal. Thus the informal illegal opportunity structure did not appear to exist and the institutionalised structure did not affect these boys at this stage.

None of them mentioned at any stage the likelihood of a professional criminal career, but this would reflect the overall approach to the problem of future work as much as specifically a problem of legality of the job. If you hadn't really thought about whether you were going to be a miner or an electrician, then you hadn't thought about the possibility of living through crime either. So for a number of reasons I could deduce no aspirations to be a professional criminal amongst these boys.

This may seem to be some distance from the subject of delinquency, yet the distance is created as much by the way sociology has looked at aspirations and delinquency as by the thesis itself. I have not only tried to show the inadequacy of searching for any cause of delinquent behaviour either within the boys experience of education or leisure, but also within the field of 'future work'. These experiences must be understood within the boys own framework, and if this is done then the experience of activity that is labelled delinquent is seen as linked with these other experiential areas, NOT through any form of causal link, but as part of a culture which is itself under attack from a whole range of sources, one of which is the police and the whole ideology of law.

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(note on this paper and R.K. Merton; This paper has been reprinted many times and in different editions of readers. It has been slightly re-written on many occasions. In some instances this has led to crucial changes; for example the reference to the "office boy to president" ideology that I quote as a footnote is at different times missing altogether or is in the text).  
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Chapter Six: Conclusions- what does this thesis mean for sociology  
and the State?

'Conclusions'	347
Methodology and theory	348-353
Subcultural theory	353-360
Sociology of education	360-366
Social policy implications	367-370
Bibliography	371

CONCLUSIONS; WHAT DOES THIS THESIS MEAN FOR SOCIOLOGY  
AND THE STATE?

'Conclusions' are part of a positivistic view of scholarship and research. In trying to write ~~the~~ 'conclusions' to the thesis I have been struck by the amount of repetition necessary from the main body of the thesis. Given my methodology this is inevitable, since the thesis attempts to talk about the experiences of 15 year old boys NOT through a series of chains of causes and effects, which would easily lead to a series of conclusions; instead I have tried to use the 'data' available to me to recreate the boys lives with their own words. These words have been put into a context which has not been written in the language of the boys but rather in the language of sociology. Thus there is a tension (outlined best by the first quote of the thesis) between the reality of the boys and the reality of sociology; but in a great many cases (as Barthes says) I have chosen the words and 'theories' of the boys to structure the thesis.

Consequently their words written within this thesis represent very much their own conclusions - the previous 100,000 words represents its own case with evidence and conclusions closely interwoven throughout. I do not intend to use this chapter therefore as an attempt to 'sum up' the 'main parts' of the thesis. Instead I would like to assume that the thesis does contain its own conclusions. This chapter will try and show the effects of these conclusions upon aspects of sociology and aspects of state power (or as it can be referred to in a more opaque way 'social policy').

## Aspects of Sociology

Methodology and Theory

The theory I have learnt from carrying out the research would lead me to start the research in a different way now. As was outlined in chapter 1 it was the boys who referred me most strongly to an understanding of the way their lives were intelligible only in terms of relationship to a 'wider society' and the institutions that represented this 'wider society', e.g. the police and the law relating to compulsory education. Coupled with this direction from the data was the existing corpus of interactionist deviancy theory (BECKER 1963; 1964, LEMERT 1962, COHEN S. 1968; 1971) which talked of the relationship between the deviant and the system of social control.

Both of these sets of pressures on the research (i.e. the boys perception of their experience as part of a nexus of relationships; and interactionist theory with its emphasis on relationships) tended to lead the methodology and the theory of the research towards an understanding of action and experience within a relationship to a wider set of institutions. Interactionist theory and research analysed the language and behaviour of a particular interaction in a context which did not cover a wide enough area of society to render that interaction entirely intelligible. Thus it saw the interaction between the policeman and the juvenile delinquent as a face to face one, rather than attempting to understand the language and action of the two within the context of the whole society. What followed from this failure was an inadequate distinction between the two sets of 'values', languages and actions of the participant, leading to what I have described as the 'universalist conception of society'. Any conflicting interactions within this view of society are then based NOT upon a difference



in material interests; instead they are based upon a lack of clarity of exactly what are these underlying universal values. Therefore the scale of the methodology of interactionism is too small to be of use in trying to analyse a relationship as part of a wider set of relationships.

Yet as has been said, the study of relationships between individuals and/or institutions was the basis of this study. If we follow the point above (i.e. that there are different experiences of the world in society, rather than different articulations of the world within the same experience) then the study of relationships has two major components.

- i) a relationship must be understood as existing between two different experiences. An example of this from the thesis is the experience of making someone go to school {which is vastly different with a different language and a different set of values and ideas<sup>2</sup>, from that of being made to go to school
- ii) each of these different sets of experiences can only be understood within the relationship. Thus if one were to try and understand how and why boys experienced being made to go to school, without an analysis of the way they were made to go, much would appear non-sensical. Similarly in the classroom I have attempted to analyse the boys behaviour ONLY in terms of classroom related behaviour; though as mentioned in point (i) this behaviour is only intelligible with reference to its differentness from the teachers, that is, its cultural milieu outside the school.

This approach builds on interactionism in a number of ways. Primarily it provides the 'deviant' or 'underdog' with a creative role and a distinctive set of experiences which are different and founded on a different biographical

set of experiences than that of the 'social control agency'. These experiences cannot be rendered intelligible by saying that they are similar to each other under a universal value system. Rather their unity is found in their being experienced, in terms of time and space, together.

In this way the working class boy experiences the power of the police NOT through a series of 'values' or 'laws' but in terms of his biography and cultural approach to rules and power. The policeman experiences something very different and both of their experiences can only be rendered intelligible by the two processes mentioned above. These two processes seem to me to add up to a definition of dialectical analysis (at least as outlined in Nicolaus' introduction to Marx Grundrisse, 1973), and in retrospect this has been nearest to the theoretical/methodological approach of the thesis. The superiority of this approach rather than the interactionist one lies in its ability to analyse deviant behaviour ONLY as part of a relationship; whilst also allowing the researcher to understand the boys' behaviour in terms of his own separate experiences of, particularly, social control. These latter experiences are understood as part of a separate cultural identity.

It is this separateness that I feel the thesis also underlines. It points to a theory of culture that views culture as a series of solutions over time to a series of material problems which are DISTINCTLY problems of these groups only. Since these material problems are distinct, then the cultural solutions are also distinct. Thus the cultural solutions to the problem of school were shown to depend upon the different experiences of school - there being no overall universal experience of school.

In this way separate cultures have grown up which have

an important effect upon the methodology that the sociologist employs to make sense of behaviour. In order to make sense of any cultural phenomena the sociologist must at least initially try and make sense of it in terms of the material situation that created it. Yet the material situation (and therefore the culture) of the sociologist is of a particular kind: that is usually male, white and middle class intellectual, and he will use this to make sense of the cultural phenomena of others unless he is totally aware of the radical differentness of material situations. Unless this is the case the different cultural phenomena are seen as in some way odd, deviant and needing some special means of explanation. The sociologist who is aware of the distinctness of material problems though will be able to make sense of these cultures in their own terms. This thesis has attempted to make sense of the boys material problems and show how these are related to their own cultural solutions in a positive way - going to school, doing nothing on the streets and drifting into a job - all these are the boys problems. Their culture does not reflect problems of education, leisure or careers and it is because sociologists have failed to perceive their material problems that working class adolescent culture has been so misinterpreted.

There are obvious methodological difficulties which need to be raised about this approach. The main difficulty is understanding the nature of the specific problems faced by individuals of a different background. Whilst this has obviously been a major problem for social scientists to date it becomes even more difficult if we use the above approach since I am claiming that the radical distinctness of problems creates a different language and culture amongst, say, working class boys of 15, than the language and culture used by us to make sense of it. In this way there are a

number of difficulties interpreting the reality of such a group since their reality is only intelligible to us through our language. Sociological methods such as those that I used in this study provide us with access to areas of this reality; but at first these areas appear odd or incongruous since we understand them in our own terms. In this way the boys spare-time activity and its perspective on rule-breaking, was incongruous and not part of the theory of subcultures outlined by Cohen A. (1955) etc. but became rational when viewed in terms of the material situations that surrounded this action.

Thus far I have explained the necessity to view social phenomena dialectically, as a relationship with other social phenomena: in specific material terms as part of a specific cultural relationship to that background; lastly I would want to stress the need to view social phenomena historically since it is only by an analysis of the way in which these specific relationships occurred over time that it is possible to see them as continuing relationships with a past and a future. Sociological methodology may be well refined until it becomes possible to grasp the reality of the dialectical relationship between say the police experience and the boys experience but this still provides only a glimpse of the process as it has developed over time. Not only do the boys separate cultural experiences relate to the police experience, but they relate to their past experience before the sociologist entered this particular reality. Thus there is a need to appreciate a historical relationship between today's footy in the streets and yesterdays; between today's truancy and the school board man of the 1890s.

In the preceeding pages I have attempted to create (or recreate) in practical, theoretical and methodological terms

a historical dialectical materialism which can provide sociology with an approach to the intelligibility of reality which <sup>intern would then</sup> gives us a great deal of insight. I have not used this term before to discuss the method and theory that I have used because it is a methodology that has evolved over the period of my research. My dissatisfaction with interactionist theory led me via the boys experience, to an attempt at dialectics; my dissatisfaction with studies of culture led me, via the boys experience, to a materialist view of culture; my dissatisfaction with a purely sociological approach led me to a need to view social action in a historical sense. Therefore, if I was going to talk in terms of conclusions, I would conclude from the thesis that this theoretical perspective needs clarification; not by reading other authors about it, but by attempting to use this theory and methodology to make sense of the world in another empirical area. In this way I feel that I can genuinely draw this conclusion from my research and from the experiences of the boys in Sunderland.

### Subcultural theory

However, the research was not simply done to clarify or create sociological theory and methodology, rather it was also an attempt to try and give an account of the reality of 15 year old working class boys in Sunderland. I do not feel that there is any possibility of these conclusions adding anything to that account, but I feel it might be useful for future researchers to know where I feel this reality leaves the sociology of subcultural theory.

Subcultural theory from Cohen (1955) through to Downes (1965) is based primarily on the relationship between a

group solution to an adolescent problem of one kind or another. I will take issue with this in the remainder of this section, for the moment though I would like to point out the major assumption of subcultural theory that my research does back up. This assumption is that the activity that we are talking about, whether it be 'delinquent' or 'spare-time' activity is a group activity and that this group activity relates to a number of specific experiential problems.

My criticisms, however, go beyond simply saying that the 'problem' is one of 'anger at the class structure' rather than 'status frustration'. I would want to create not only a different idea of the way in which these boys perceive their problems but also discuss the way in which their solutions to problems were put into action. For Cohen and others have transferred the way in which they perceive problems, create solutions and act in them to the boys. Perhaps not only the problems of the boys are different from Cohen, but also the way in which they think about them?

Cohen and others seem to see the 'problem' for these boys as a perceived constant; as something which effects all their actions as part of the group. In this way 'status frustration' or 'blocked opportunity' becomes the one problem that can be seen to lead to delinquent activities. My more specific criticisms of these ideas are to be found in the text of the thesis but in a more general way it does not represent the way these boys action is effected by their problems. If we look at the way that Cohen discusses the boys reactions to, for example, 'status frustration' was the creation of a whole new value system by the boys. This means that the whole of the boys values in many fields

were shaped by this one problem. I found that the boys were much more pragmatic in their approach to problems than this suggests; that this across the board reaction to a single experienced problem does not manifest itself in the sections on careers, school or spare-time. The boys activities on the street corner are affected by their experiences of their time at school but ~~are~~ in no way can they be said to be caused by them; their activities in the classroom are affected by their street corner activities but can in no way be seen as a solution to the problems met there. Rather the boys learn in both these places (as well as others like the home) ways of solving specific problems in many different areas of life. The constants that I tried to show existed between school and street corner sub-cultural activities was the similarity of method of response to authority (for example) NOT a similarity in content of action. Thus the boys do differentiate greatly between activities in school and activities on the street corner; they differentiate between police and teachers in terms of the amount of power that these individuals wield and the way that they wield that power; whilst the compulsory attendance of school does affect their behaviour throughout their day it is only when they are at school that it becomes a problem to which they need a solution. Subcultural theory has in the past put much too much stress on a belief that there is a single overall constant problem to which all subcultural action is a solution.

There is also a general point to be made about the nature of the solution. Delinquent action in subcultural theory is always viewed primarily as infraction, as law-breaking. The major component of the action for the youth is the fact that it breaks the law. The action represents

a solution to the problem of 'status frustration' for example primarily because it is rule-breaking and it is this characteristic that sets it apart as a solution from other activity. This equation for subcultural theorists between all action that is labelled law-breaking by the police and the motivation for the boys who it is claimed also see such action as law-breaking is much too simplistic to make sense of these boys lives in Sunderland. Whilst certain of their actions do in a legal sense break the law the boys did not categorise their actions that way. Similarly whilst certain of their actions contravened the ideology of police practice the boys did not categorise their actions in this way. Thus I would criticise subcultural theory for simply believing that its own focus, i.e. delinquent activity, was the focus of the boys lives and the focus of their sub-cultural solutions.

Some of the boys actions did contravene the police idea of order and were punishable but this way of conceptualising the behaviour is the police's not the boys. The boys' perception of this police ideology does effect their action on the streets but not as the simplistic solution to the general problem that subcultural theorists claim. Instead I would construct a theory which explains the initial existence on the corner of the street as a solution to the problems of boredom and autonomy of action that they feel during their spare-time. The activities of 'getting into fights' and 'wierd ideas' are specific solutions to these problems. It is at this stage that the boys perception of police power becomes a problem since it is at this stage that certain of their actions contravene the ideology of police practice. Thus the 'law' becomes a problem which must be coped with and taken into account



when confronting the other problems of boredom and autonomy of action. However even at this stage there is no specific legal category which sets some actions off from others since the boys perception of law is much less important than their perception of police power. Thus rather than seeing 'getting into fights', for example, as illegal it becomes one activity which is part of a penumbra of activities all of which are effected by the possibility of police action and interference through police power. It is this way that the police enter into the experience of Saturday night for these boys NOT through the subcultural theorists insistence on deviance as a solution. Authority is not simply violated as a solution to their problem, rather authority is ignored unless it forces itself upon the boys and then there are attempts to get round it. In the same way, subcultural action in school can be discussed NOT as a deliberate rebellion against the cultural values of the school but rather as an attempt to maintain a subculture distinct from the institutional effects of the schools values.

Subcultural action is about specific solutions to specific problems, and whilst it is possible to see correspondences between similar solutions and problems, such similarities need to be looked for within the actors experience. Previous subcultural research seems to have found these correspondences within the subcultural theorists interests. *These interests have, up to now, been very much on delinquent behaviour,* Since rather than on a general interest in the action of young people and their experience; thus subcultural theory has continually and uncritically accepted the label delinquent for the activity involved.

What then are the problems for the working class boys of Sunderland? Their activity and their words about their activity does not make it possible to create this across the

board problem that other research would appear to have found (e.g. Hargreaves 1968). However, it is possible by analysing the action of these boys to create a number of common themes running through their solutions. Most notably there is always an attempt to try and get away from authority and to give the group as much chance of autonomy over its own actions as possible. For example, if we look at their attitudes towards playing football, the boys do not play the sort of football that tells you when to stop and start (i.e. after 45 minutes each half) and tells you how to play (a clear offside rule); we can see that they prefer to structure their own game. From this and other examples we can see that they perceive a problem of structure, authority and control over their actions. Thus they keep away from youth clubs, sit at the back of the classroom in order to try and keep as far away from authority as possible.

What then is the problem that they confront here? In terms of their own language it would appear to be one of groups of individuals attempting to change the boys in one way or another. Thus rather than an indistinct problem like 'authority' I would believe that this should be put in experiential terms of the boys, i.e. somebody attempting to change you. The solution to this problem that must be a group solution is to attempt to negate the effect of the people who are trying to change you. The tactics WITHIN this solution vary according to the situation. As far as the youth club is concerned it is possible to absent yourself from the institutions trying to change you. But at school it is necessary to confront the rules of the institution in one way or another. Thus the boys evade the rules of compulsory attendance; attempt to negate the power of the teacher. However, each specific solution is much

more pragmatic in use, than the subcultural theorists have previously discussed them. Throughout, its solutions to problems will be pragmatic rather than governed by values in the way in which subcultural theorists have pictured them. Indeed it is this relationship between values and actions (a theme which runs throughout the thesis) that Cohen and others seem to have misrepresented. Firstly, the values that the school and other institutions attempt to convey to the boys as 'natural' are not treated by the boys as their guidelines for action. Their cultural guidelines for action have been created by their experience of their material problems and by their tried and tested solutions to these problems. However, to call these values which govern actions is to obscure more than it illuminates, since the term value implies something much stronger which can be set over and above the class-to-class experiential actions of these boys. Instead their guidelines for action are dynamic; they effect their experience and are effected by their experience. For example to claim as Cohen and Hargreaves do that the value of 'Respect for Private Property' is at first adhered to and then reversed by these boys is absurd when one looks at their total experiences. Whether part of the 'delinquent' subculture or not, their pocket money and their fags are viewed differently from the window of the local Co-op; this is viewed differently from their Dad's T.V. etc. Thus it is the idea of something called private property which you respect qua private property that is questionable. Private property is respected to a lesser or a greater extent depending whose property it is. This example could be expanded to show the different ways in which these boys make sense of all of these values from the picture painted by Cohen and Hargreaves.

Indeed I believe it is possible to go further than this and say that it is precisely the adherence to values as guidelines for action that the schools are trying to educate the boys into and that the boys reject. It is not specific values that the boys reject so much as the control over their activity of any set of concepts which do not spring from that activity. Thus as I have said above they do, in a way, have cultural values but these spring from and continue to relate to their own experience of the world. This rejection of values is much more radical than the rejection of some specific values to be replaced by others (negative reaction) since it refuses to acknowledge any set of controlling concepts from outside of their experience of the world. Again this would account for and consolidate the continuing theme of the thesis, the apartness of working class culture. It could not be incorporated by education, law or media because none of these sprang from its experience. Instead it has tended to make these intrusions in its own image. This has led me to a much stronger version of subcultural theory which claims that the only control over action that will be enforced by these boys is one that they feel is correct. This does not deny the power of such institutions as education and the law to attempt to enforce bourgeois values onto working class youth, but it claims that these institutions and these values themselves become another problem for working class culture.

### Sociology of Education

Throughout this thesis I have been surprised at the difficulty I have had in relating this work to those areas of sociology that it should logically connect with. This is especially so in the sociology of education, where there

is a mass of material both on classroom activity and on the history of education. There have even been two studies which seemed to exactly cover the same ground as this thesis (Hargreaves 1968; Macdonald 1970). It is surprising that up till now Macdonald has not been mentioned at all since she was specifically interested in the relationship between class, education and delinquency. However, Macdonald's whole epistemology, theory and methodology renders her work outside of my own interests, and impossible to comment on in any useful way.

Hargreaves book does not suffer from the above faults so blatantly. He talks with some detail and understanding of the experience of secondary school for the boys in his study. He also talks about the relationship between school experience and delinquency in a way which is linked in terms of the boys actions and life. His major theoretical stance is that of Cohen, with the problem of status frustration leading to the creation of a delinquent subculture in the school. His improvement on Cohen is in the area of situating the theory concretely in the lives and experiences of a secondary modern school. The rejection of middle class values outlined by Cohen is portrayed with great validity within the educational experience. The reinforcement of the delinquent culture is carried out by unwittingly stereotyping teachers and a streaming system selecting not only 4A but also 4D, the base of the delinquent culture. Each stage in the process is provided with a wealth of material from the boys own language.

My general criticism of Cohen and Hargreaves runs throughout the thesis, and is mainly about the assumption of the success of the school in, at least initially,

successfully instilling middle class values into working class boys. However, in this section I would like much more to question his approach to the educational experience.

Hargreaves claimed that the school was attempting to, and succeeding in, inculcating middle class norms, but throughout he sees this as a sort of mistake. He clearly, throughout, assumes that the education system is not intended to try and change the lives of working class boys, instead he claims that this is purely caused by bad teaching. A number of quotes from his preface and conclusions betrays this approach.

"The fact that they (the teachers) welcomed an outside researcher so warmly into the school and that they co-operated so fully and so patiently in the research is an outstanding testimony to the concern of such teachers to accept the challenge of educating the children in their care."

(HARGREAVES 1968; vii)

"It is possible that more progress would be made if the teachers identified the boys of high informal status and used them as a means of entry to the peer group, for unless the leaders are 'converted' first, there is little hope of effecting any extensive attitude change. When the teacher finds himself in permanent combat with the informal leaders, he has forsaken his only chance of directing the behaviour of these boys into the channels he considers desirable. Attempts to compel these boys by force of threat of punishment into an academic orientation are self-defeating and have the reverse effect. It may seem unrealistic to treat 'bad' pupils as if they were 'good' pupils, but if the teacher is to achieve his

ends he needs to transform the role conception of the pupils; and to do this he must obtain the loyalty and co-operation of the informal leaders.

..... Once these boys had received favourable recognition from the teacher, the process of re-organisation of behaviour and personality around this new role could begin. And the lower status boys would tend to follow their leaders. Such techniques are not panaceas for all teaching problems, but they do indicate that the teachers manipulation of the informal status hierarchy in difficult forms can have fruitful results."

(HARGREAVES 1968; 188-189)

Phrases such as the 'challenge of the education of the children in their care', 'directing the boys' behaviour into channels he considers desirable' and words such as 'progress' and 'fruitful results' betray Hargreaves overall approach to 'education' and the institution of education. Basically he never questions the nature or aims of these institutions; instead he is engaged in a research project encapsulated within the aims and the institutions of the education system of this country. This effects his results throughout since there is little attempt to situate all of the boys actions and ideas within their setting. This belief, in education as a good thing, is only recently under attack,

"Thus in order to explore situationally defined meanings in taken for granted institutional contexts such as schools, very detailed case studies are necessary which treat as problematic the curricular, pedagogic and assessment categories held by school personnel. However, such studies on their own, which give accounts

of the realities which emerge from the interactions of members, cannot help avoiding the socio-historical contexts in which such realities become available ... The methodological lesson from ... (this) ... is that these interactional studies must be complemented by attempts to conceptualise the links between interactions and changing social structures in such a way as to point to new kinds of research which at present seems almost wholly lacking."

(YOUNG 1972; 5)

As Young suggests rendering the 'education' offered by secondary schools in this country problematic (in a contextual AND a historic sense) changes the whole nature of the research results.

Once I had been led to question the compulsory nature of school by the boys I had to make sense of the reason behind why they had to go to school. It was only by questioning this that I could make sense of the boys experience. Thus only when both sides of the interaction were problematic was either side intelligible.

My own analysis of why there is compulsory schooling is different in emphasis from a similar strand of explanation (Illich 1973; Holt 1971; Kozol 1970) that has recently emerged known as <sup>'de-</sup>schooling'. This is to be expected since the problems that these writers are interested in are not made sense of in specifically historical terms. Illich's analysis is unclear when answering the questions who brought about schooling? and why?. This is linked to his a-sociological account of how 'society' will change the present situation. Similarly Holt and Kozol fail to demarcate the lines of who started schooling who in any clear way. (However Kozol's analysis



of the use of schools in the present day is much clearer than the others of this group).

There is, however, a recent trend in American research which much more closely follows my sociological/historical analysis of institutions. Platt (1969), Katz (1969) and Richmond (1972) have all recently come to have some effect upon sociological research on both sides of the Atlantic. Platt questioned the taken-for-granted ideas about progressive treatment of child offenders in the 19th Century U.S.A.; Katz did the same for the 19th Century school reform; Richmond for the asylum movement. All three of these authors questioned the idea that 'society' had decided these three things for itself and looked more closely at the role of the State in adopting these measures. They portray a policy of imposition of a policy of interference in the lives of the working class of the 19th Century.

Research in this country has not followed this trend yet though in the past year some interesting work is being started (Frith 1973; P.R.D. Corrigan 1973; Cowburn 1973; Falcos, 1973). It has all started, as has my own approach, by questioning the meaning of education; seeking an answer to these questions by viewing the State as acting not for the whole society but for one part of that society. Education is depicted as an attempt to change the way in which the working class think and it is here where Hargreaves' analysis comes close to this approach. For his understanding of the middle class school values is obviously as a set of values that the school attempts to indoctrinate the boys into. This process is obviously not thought worthy of analysis; he never asks why this is happening. Yet if this is happening then the education system could be experienced as an attempt to change the

lives of working class people and their behaviour could be made sense of only in relationship to this attack. However Hargreaves accepts this as normal.

If, however, the sociology of education were not to accept this as normal and would treat this action as problematic as it treats 'educational underachievement'; if sociology of education was desist from its functionalist belief that education is good for 'society' as a whole; it would increase the breadth of its possibility for understanding the way in which both teacher and taught experienced the classroom situation. Sociology of education even more than criminology (S. Cohen 1971) has acted as a 'service' sub-discipline dealing with the problems of the education system as they arise without questioning the aims of that system. Much of the research in the area has been by people who have the best interests of the working class at heart (e.g. Halsey et al 1961 ) and who perceive the education system as a possible way out of working class life. These researchers have never looked at the concrete experience of the majority of working class youth as a real reaction to the educational situation. They have viewed this majority reaction as pathological, whereas I have tried to initially accept it as possible and then, in researching into its 'possibility', came to see this reaction as totally rational.

In this way the sociology of education is an area of the discipline which is ripe for a complete change of direction brought about by treating the States definition of education as problematic.

'Social Policy Implications'

Obviously much of the adherence to the idea of education as a "good thing" in the part of sociologists of education has come about in an attempt to retain some influence on the policy of the State. Such researchers want to relate their research to policy for fear of failing to have effect upon the real world, for fear of being mere intellectuals. I would not find it possible to find any possible policies for the state from my research because my research has as one of its main elements a contradiction between the experience of being a 15 year old working class boy and the values that the state bases its policy on. This contradiction is the main reason why the tremendously ambitious attempt to change the nature of the beliefs and actions of the working class through education has not succeeded to the extent hoped. The boys that go to school are not empty vessels that wait to be filled by teachers or corrected by police and magistrates. Rather they take to school a culture which directly contradicts what they are told at school and crucially it is this culture rather than middle class values that is reinforced by their world and their parents world. All attempts to lower the school starting age or raise the school leaving age are attempts to outweigh the importance of this culture by more time in the school environment. Similarly attempts to teach 'working class relevant education' are attempts to relate the values and discipline of school to the culture of the boys home - to relate it and then to 'build' on it. Any policy implications are within this field and I would not feel it compatible with the strength of feeling portrayed by these boys against school, youth clubs or police to provide a conclusion which would give any undue hope to anyone in these professions. The boys experience teachers,

youth leaders and police as pushing them around because this is precisely what these institutions are there to do. Thus it is not that I am morally against policy considerations, rather that my research provides me with an analysis which does not allow them as realistic.

What about violence in schools? What about ROSCA? What about <sup>^</sup>vandalism in the streets? etc. etc. These issues are not of no concern for me but within this <sup>concern</sup> these their consideration must be carried out in terms of the analysis provided (something which Hargreaves fails to do). Violence in schools, just as violence on the streets is part of a process of living which headlines and law both rip out of their context to analyse. Within its context the attacks on teachers and the attacks on telephone boxes are rendered intelligible:- the first within an overall struggle between 'teachers' and 'taught' or between 'changer' and 'resister'; the second within the context of boredom on the streets and a specific lack of autonomy over spare-time action of a more 'legitimate' character. In any case what social policy wants to know about either of these questions is how to stop it?

The answer to how to stop it can be found in the end section of chapter 3. This section discusses different methods of control that groups of the boys respected and that controlled them. It was not the norms behind bourgeois rules that stopped these boys; it was not the learnt rules that stopped them; fear of getting caught stopped only a few of them during the periods when they were not under surveillance, the only effective method of control inside and outside the school (see end of chapter 4) was total surveillance by a superior power than the boys all the time. In the presence of authority (indeed

in the close presence since the back row of the class provided sanctuary) the boys were almost inevitably going to keep to the rules. Thus in the case of disobedience in class it was because there were not enough teachers in the class; in the case of violence against the teacher it was because the teacher was not tough enough; in the case of smashed telephone boxes it was because there was no police present at the time since the presence of a police officer usually induces good behaviour by stopping all noticeable action. This therefore may sound old-fashioned but if control is what these institutions are seeking they will not find it by changing the moral values of boys since their conception of the life that the boys culture is based on is so weak. Instead, they will need constant vigilance, since they are attempting to change the culture and action that has been under attack already for some considerable while, and has proved itself adaptable and strong enough to still be in conflict with the school and the law.

There are two accusations which I feel will be levelled at this thesis in intellectual/policy terms. The first is about the thesis attitude to working class culture. Previously anyone who writes in such a light about working class culture has been called a romantic since they portray that culture in a favourable light. However, I would argue that at no point have I said that working class culture is in any way better than middle class culture except in the crucial area of solving the problems of working class life. Thus within working class life, within the problems of being a 15 year old in Sunderland, working class culture is best. I do not feel this implies a romanticism since, I hope, I have been able to portray that culture as

emerging from a concrete situation which is neither a good situation nor a bad one if you are outside of it. The situation from which this particular culture emerges are not particularly free and easy; in this thesis they are about being pushed around. The culture created by them is by no means romantic; there are no noble savages in Sunderland schools, but there are boys attempting to cope with situations with their friends, just as the boys at Eton try and cope with their situation.

I may also be accused throughout this thesis of a lack of sympathy for teachers, policemen, social workers and youth leaders who have difficult jobs and should be being assisted by sociologists not carped at. I would argue against this resolutely, I believe along with many teachers, an increasing number of social workers and many ex-policemen <sup>There is an increasing feeling</sup> that their work is not only difficult, but impossible. Built as it is on the contradiction of change and resistance to change <sup>outlined above, their</sup> ~~within that contradiction.~~ Teachers work is made no easier by attempts at change within that contradiction. Teachers work will only become harmonious when they are teaching in a society which is not divided in terms of vastly different life experiences; when their pupils can view them as friends not as aliens from another part of society.

## CONCLUSIONS Bibliography

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## Paul Corrigan - What Young People Think of School

YOUR NAME: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

- 1) At the start of a new term are you glad to be coming back to school?

Yes (1)  
No 2

- 2) Why do you feel this way?

At school you have plenty to do. The holidays are sometimes boring.

2

- 3) Will you be glad when you have finally left school?

Yes (1)  
No 2

- 4) Why do you feel that way?

I will be glad to get a job when I get married.

2

- 5) Which classes do you look forward to?

P.E. Physics and Geography.

2  
1  
1

- 6) Why do you look forward to these rather than other classes?

I am interested in the lessons and we get good teachers for these subjects.

4

- 7) Which classes do you dislike?

Maths.

2  
1  
2



8) Why do you dislike these classes more than others?

The maths is sometimes very difficult  
and the teacher we get does not explain  
properly.

1

9) Will the things that you are told at school help you to get a job when you leave school?

Yes (1)

No 2

10) What sort of things will help you?

Take examinations to help get better  
jobs.

2  
1  
2  
2

11) Do you think that the things you are told at school will help you in other ways when you leave school?

Yes (1)

No 2

12) What sort of things will help you?

write letters. get on with other  
people.

1  
2  
2  
2

13) How long have you lived in Pennywell?

I do not live in Pennywell.

All my life 1

Over 5 years 2

Under 5 years 3

9

14) Do you think you will spend all your life in Sunderland?

Yes (1)

No 2

- 15) What work do you expect to be doing in the first job that you get when you leave school?  
(Put exactly what you think your job will be)

Engineer.

2

- 16) Do you think you will be doing this job all your life?

Yes 1  
No 2

- 17) If you think you will change your job, why will you change it and what to?

WHY? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT TO? \_\_\_\_\_

9  
9

- 18) People do different jobs for all sorts of reasons. Which of the following do you think is the MOST important about any job you do?

(Only put a ring around ONE number)

The work must be interesting 1  
The job must be well paid 2  
My work-mates must be friendly 3  
There must be good chances of promotion 4

- 19) If you could choose any job, what would you be?

Footballer.

5

- 20) In Sunderland, there will be lots of boys leaving school this year. They will all be doing different sorts of jobs. Why do you think some of them will get better jobs than yourself?

They will have better 'a' levels and

'O' levels.

1

- 21) Do you think it will be very difficult for you to get a job when you leave school?

Yes 1  
No 2

22) Why do you think it will be difficult?

Because of the <sup>high</sup> unemployment

23) Sometimes we all dream about being things we know we shall never be (for example, pop star, spy, big businessman).  
What job do you dream about?

Footballer.

24) Suppose a close friend of yours is thinking of playing truant one day. Would you try and talk him out of this?

Yes 1

No 2

25) Why do you think this?

Because it is up to him.

26) Imagine that a group of boys at school took a dislike to to a boy you know and decided to rough him up a bit. If you found out about the plans, what would be the first thing you would do?

(Only put a ring round ONE number)

Tell the teacher 1

Tell the boy 2

Do nothing 3

Get a few friends together and fight  
the group of boys 4

Try and talk the boys out of their plan 5



I would like to know what you think about some things at your school. Below there are a list of statements. Beside each statement there are a number of spaces. Put a cross in the one closest to your opinion.

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
27)	Teachers here are not strict enough.			X	
28)	Teachers don't understand the boys.		X		
29)	Boys get away with too much.			X	
30)	Discipline is important so that the teacher can teach.		X		
31)	Teachers shouldn't punish boys for smoking.			X	
32)	Boys should have to wear school uniform.			X	
33)	Boys should be allowed to swear in school.		X		
34)	Teachers don't really care what happens to me - they're just doing a job.		X		1
35)	Boys should be allowed to have long hair.	X			
36)	Teachers should not be allowed to smoke in school.			X	
37)	Boys should be allowed to smoke in school.			X	
38)	Teachers are right to stop boys swearing.		<del>X</del>	X	

things that you feel boys are unfairly punished for?  
If so list them:

leaving the orchestra and  
band.

2  
2  
2  
2  
2  
1

40) Why do you think teachers punish boys?

Because they do things not along the  
school rules.

41) Are boys hit very often in your class? How often?

(Only put a ring round ONE number)

Is there someone hit every class?

1

Is there someone hit every day?

2

Is there someone hit every week?

③

42) What sort of things are they hit for?

Talking.

43) What things have you been punished for at school in the  
last two terms?

Not learning home work.

44) Do you think you will be punished for something in the  
next term or so?

Yes

①

No

2

45) If you answered YES to the last question- What sort of  
things do you think you will be punished for?

skipping, rowdiness.



These are a few unfinished sentences. I would like you to finish off the sentences in your own words.

For example: I go to a youth club because .....  
I go to a youth club because all my friends do.

- 46) I think the teachers at this school are ..... *all right* ..... 3
- 47) . In class I like to ..... *talk* ..... 1
- 48) . What I like about school is ..... *excellent* ..... 5
- 49) What I dislike about school is ..... *poor teachers* ..... 2
- 50) . When I do something wrong my teacher ..... *claps me* ..... 1
- 51) I think that a boy who is cheeky with teacher is ..... *sometimes* ..... *laugh* ..... 3
- 52) A boy who gets on with his work is ..... *reasonable* ..... 3
- 53) I think that a boy who plays truant is ..... *dull* ..... 3
- 54) . A teacher that hits you is ..... *big headed* ..... 1
- 55) . The teachers think I am ..... *intelligent* ..... 4
- 56) . The trouble with teachers is ..... *they do not understand you* ..... 3
- 57) . Boys that get into trouble are ..... *they do not understand you* ..... *dull* ..... 3
- 58) . I come to school because ..... *I have to* ..... 2
- 59) . Smoking in school is ..... *illegal* ..... 2
- 60) I think skinheads are ..... *alright* ..... 2
- 61) ... Pop music is ..... *quite good* ..... 2

820

18

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

Paul Corrigan- Leisure activities of young people

1) Are you interested in football?

Yes

1

No

2

2) How many times have you been to Roker Park this season?

7

4

3) Do you ever buy magazines about football?

Yes

1

No

2

4) On Saturday evenings do you specially listen to the football results?

Yes

1

No

2

5) Do you spend some time every Sunday reading reports of football matches in the newspapers?

Yes

1

No

2

6) Do you and your friends spend much time talking about football?

Yes

1

No

2

7) Do you spend much time playing football?

(Only put a ring round ONE number)

Every day

1

Twice a week

2

Once a week

3

Never

4

Here are some activities. Could you say whether you like them, dislike them, or never tried them?

		LIKE	DISLIKE	NEVER TRIED
8)	Going to a Youth Club	✓		
9)	Sitting in a café	✓		
10)	Going to a football match	✓		
11)	Playing football	✓		
12)	Smoking		✓	
13)	Going out with the lads	✓		
14)	Going out with girls	✓		
15)	Going to a cinema	✓		
16)	Watching T.V. at home	✓		
17)	Staying in with Mum & Dad	✓		
18)	Reading books		✓	
19)	Reading comics	✓		
20)	Visiting relatives	✓		
21)	Going to a dance	✓		
22)	Being on the streets	✓		
23)	Listening to records on my own		✓	



Everyone breaks some rules and regulations during their life. Some people break them often and others only now and then. Below are some broken by boys of your own age.

TICK THOSE YOU HAVE BROKEN IN THE LAST YEAR

24) Played truant from school.

NEVER ☒  
ONCE OR TWICE  
SEVERAL TIMES  
OFTEN

25) Taken something worth less than a £1 from a shop.

NEVER ☒  
OFTEN  
SEVERAL TIMES  
ONCE OR TWICE

26) Taken something worth more than £1 from a shop.

OFTEN  
SEVERAL TIMES  
ONCE OR TWICE  
NEVER ☒

27) Roughed up kids who hadn't done anything to you.

NEVER ☒  
ONCE OR TWICE ☒  
SEVERAL TIMES  
OFTEN

28) Damaged railway carriages, tracks, stations.

OFTEN  
SEVERAL TIMES  
ONCE OR TWICE  
NEVER ☒

29) Spent nights away from home without your parents knowing.

NEVER ☒  
ONCE OR TWICE  
SEVERAL TIMES  
OFTEN

30) Broken into somebody's house to steal something.

OFTEN

SEVERAL TIMES

ONCE OR TWICE

NEVER ✓

31) Taken some things like money from your friends.

OFTEN

SEVERAL TIMES

ONCE OR TWICE

NEVER ✓

32) Taken some things like money from your family.

OFTEN

SEVERAL TIMES

ONCE OR TWICE ✓

NEVER

33) Spashed a streetlamp or something else in the street.

OFTEN

SEVERAL TIMES

ONCE OR TWICE ✓

NEVER

34) Taken things from someone at school.

NEVER ✓

ONCE OR TWICE

SEVERAL TIMES

OFTEN

35) Slipped into cinemas without paying.

OFTEN

SEVERAL TIMES

ONCE OR TWICE

NEVER ✓

36) Been on a bus without paying.

OFTEN

SEVERAL TIMES ✓

ONCE OR TWICE

NEVER

37) Used something you knew had been stolen by someone else.

OFTEN

SEVERAL TIMES

ONCE OR TWICE

NEVER ✓

36) Carried a weapon to use in a fight.

ONCE OR TWICE ✓  
FURTHER TIMES

2

39) Deliberately broken something at school.

ENTER ✓  
CASH PRICE  
SEVERAL TIMES  
OFTEN

1

40) Taken things from a building site.

SEVERAL TIMES  
ONCE OR TWICE  
NEVER ✓

1

41) Taken part in gang-fights.

NEVER  
ONCE OR TWICE ✓  
SEVERAL TIMES  
OFTEN

2

42) Throwing stones at a passing car or cycle.

NEVER ✓  
ONCE OR TWICE  
SEVERAL TIMES  
OFTEN

1	2
2	2
2	2
2	2
2	2
2	2
2	2
2	2
1	2
1	2
2	2
1	2
2	2
2	2
2	2
1	2
2	2

43) Would you list your FIVE favourite movies/groups.

DEEP PURPLE.  
FREE  
BLACK SABBATH.  
ELVIS PRESLEY.  
JIMMY HENDRIXS.

44) Do most of your friends like pop music?

Yes	1
No	2

45) Do you ever buy any magazines or papers about pop music?

11c	1
11d	2

46) When the Isle of Wight Pop Festival was on in the summer, did it ever occur to you that you would have liked to have been there?

Yes 1  
No 2

47) How often do you listen to records on a record player?  
(Only put a ring round ONE number)

Every day 1  
Once or Twice a Week 2  
Once a month 3  
Never 4

In what ways do you listen to pop music apart from records on a record player?

PLEASE PUT AN X IN ONE BOX FOR EACH METHOD OF LISTENING

		EVERY DAY	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK	OFTEN	NEVER
48)	RADIO 1	X			
49)	JUKE BOX			X	

50) How often do you hear live groups at dances or concerts?  
(Only put a ring round ONE number)

Every Week 1  
Once a month 2  
Less often 3  
Never 4

51) How often do you watch TOP OF THE POPS?  
(Only put a ring round ONE number)

Every week 1  
Once a month 2  
Less Often 3  
Never 4



- 52) My parents  
(a) Sometimes discourage me from going around with certain boys 1  
(b) Don't mind which friends I choose 2
- 53) . If I came bottom in my class, my parents would  
(a) Not mind at all 1  
(b) Be very angry and expect better results next term 2  
(c) Be a bit disappointed and tell me to try harder 3
- 54) My parents  
(a) Allow me to smoke if I want to 1  
(b) Won't allow me to smoke 2
- 55) My parents  
(a) Don't mind me swearing 1  
(b) Get angry when I swear 2
- 56) . My parents  
(a) Like pop music 1  
(b) Don't like or dislike it 2  
(c) Dislike pop music 3